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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Evolving Religious Formation



Ignatian Discernment of Spirits



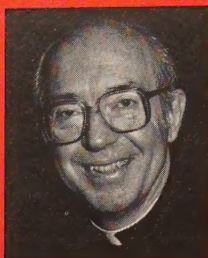
Integrating Self-Esteem and Self-Denial



Joseph Campbell's Catholic Vision



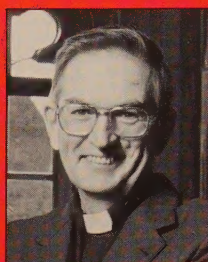
Support for New Priests



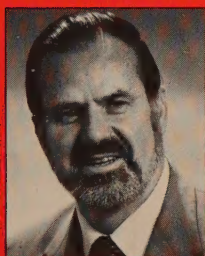
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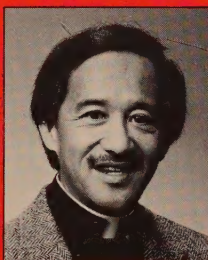
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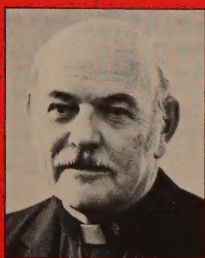
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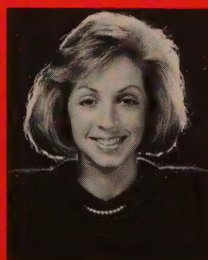
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EDITOR'S PAGE

IGNATIUS PROVIDES A REMEDY

The condition of American youth is alarming. That is a truth brought clearly to light and illustrated by a series of studies reported during the past few months. The first of these analyses, titled "The Age of Indifference," was provided by the Times-Mirror Center for the People and the Press. Its principal message is that today's 48 million young Americans aged 18 to 30 "know less and care less" about news and public affairs than any other generation of Americans in the past half century. One indication of their lack of concern is the fact that in the 1988 presidential election, only 36 percent of them cared enough to cast a vote. Less than a third read a newspaper every day, and when they do, their interest is focused principally on issues related to either sports or sex. The report comments, "Social scientists and pollsters have long recognized that younger people have usually been somewhat less attuned to politics and serious issues. But the difference now is more striking than ever before." Even such blockbuster events as the end of the Cold War and the political transformation of Eastern Europe have failed to attract the interest of the vast majority of young people in this country.

A second recent study, conducted by *Time* magazine and published under the heading "twenty-something," focused on other traits and behaviors characteristic of the same generation. It found that these young people, who have grown up in a time of divorce, drugs, and economic strain, have a hazy sense of their individual identity and a great deal of difficulty making decisions. They also want to postpone growing up, are frequently worried about the future, and manifest an anxious desire to avoid

risk, pain, and rapid change. Nearly half the people in their twenties are children of divorce and regard themselves as having been neglected. Chicago sociologist Paul Hirsch has observed: "This generation came from a culture that really didn't prize having kids anyway. Their parents just wanted to go and play out their roles—they assumed their kids were going to grow up all right."

The *Time* study discovered that the young are afraid of relationships in general and skeptical about entering into marriage. They have seldom witnessed deep commitments that are fulfilled, whether in marriage, business, or professional life. For many of them, "nuptial vows have lost their credibility." So too, it might be added, have religious and priestly vows.

The idea of traveling and being mobile appeals to the young as very romantic. They are "environmentally conscious" and want to be active in projects that are short-term and small in scope, such as cleaning up a park over a weekend or teaching literacy to underprivileged children. They tend to blame their rootlessness and noncommittal attitude on the fact that they find no figures in the present who compare with such heroes as John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. One young woman from Wyoming complained, "It seems there were all these great people in the sixties. Now there's nobody."

A disquieting study of somewhat younger Americans was reported in Aspen, Colorado, at the 1990 Design Conference, which focused on the needs of children. As described by columnist Anthony Lewis in the *New York Times*, the study revealed that "more than 20 percent of American children live below the official poverty line. In cities the figure is 30 percent. Minority children are far more likely to be poor: 45 percent of black and 39 percent of Hispanic children. In this rich country 100,000 children are homeless."

The participants in the Aspen conference learned that a commission jointly established by the Amer-

ican Medical Association and the National Association of State Boards of Education has found that American teenagers, as a whole, have profound problems of physical and emotional health. "On the average day," the commission stated, "135,000 students bring guns to school. Every year 1 million teen-age girls, almost a tenth of the age group, become pregnant; 2.5 million adolescents contract a sexually transmitted disease. More than 1 million are regular users of drugs." The commission concluded, "never before has one generation of American teen-agers been less healthy, less cared-for or less prepared for life than their parents were at the same age." Jane Clark Chermayeff, co-chair of the conference, commented, "It's not that we don't know what to do. It's that we're not doing it."

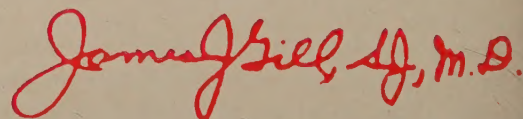
So what is it that has to happen if the young people between 18 and 30 are going to become less self-preoccupied, more aware of the conditions and needs of others, and motivated to invest themselves in improving the lives of the ailing generation growing up just behind them?

One promising scenario could develop from the Jesuit order's celebration this year of a double anniversary, 500 years after the birth of St. Ignatius of Loyola and 450 years after his founding of the Society of Jesus. The 25,000 Jesuit sons of Ignatius, spread throughout the world today, know well that their founder, as a young man, closely fit the profile just sketched of the "twentysomething" Americans. What God did in Ignatius's young adult life suggests what could occur in the lives of millions. In his youth Ignatius was self-centered, vain, grasping for a sense of identity, devoted to women and risk-taking, and living what he himself described as a thoroughly "worldly life." But all it took to change him was a battlefield wound that crippled his right leg and left him asking for romantic novels to help him get through the boring months of recuperation. Providentially, he was given instead a copy of the *Life of Christ*, by Carthusian Ludolph von Sachsen, and some lives of saints,

by Dominican Jacobus de Voragine. Through these readings God touched Ignatius's mind and heart with life-converting grace that enabled him to find a hero, leader, and intimate friend in the person of Jesus Christ, and models to emulate in St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic.

From then on, by concentrating his attention and affection on the thoughts and deeds of Jesus and his divine Father, Ignatius learned to care about the conditions and needs of people far beyond his own little world. Through his personal experiences of God, especially during prayer, he became a person profoundly grateful, generative, self-sacrificing, and zealous to a degree that will be remembered by the church until the end of time. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, which he composed as a result of his own experiences, Ignatius left to us a God-given instrument with which to overcome narcissism and to become committed and persevering in helping the Lord establish his Kingdom. This year, Jesuits in America and all over the world are pledging themselves—in honor of Ignatius—to making these practical *Exercises* better known and more widely used, especially among the young.

If God could so marvelously transform the life of an immature Basque soldier through his injury—occasioned contact with Jesus Christ, is it too much to hope that through the use of Ignatius's *Exercises*, the same sort of miracle might be performed in countless lives in our day, by the same powerful God—until our country and our world are filled with spiritual descendants of Ignatius, and the future of the young has become far more hopeful than the Times-Mirror Center, *Time* magazine, and the Aspen conference would lead us to expect?



James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Ignatius of Loyola's Discernment of Spirits

William A. Barry, S.J., Ph.D.

Ignatio (Ignatius) of Loyola lived in an age comparable in its turmoil and promise to our own. Like us, he lived at a time when one world order was crumbling and a new one was struggling to be born. One could say that he was the religious genius the Catholic church needed in order to see its way into the new world being born during his lifetime. What was his most original insight, from which all his work flowed? I would say that it was the idea that God can be found in all things; that every human experience has a religious dimension and meaning. The point is illustrated in the very first chapter of the autobiography that Ignatius dictated to Gonçalves da Câmara. Ignatius, the brave, womanizing, ambitious knight, was convalescing at the castle of Loyola from the shattering of his leg by a cannonball. Here is how he tells the story, in the third person:

As he was much given to reading worldly and fictitious books, usually called books of chivalry, when he felt better he asked to be given some of them to pass the time. But in that house none of those that he usually read could be found, so they gave him a *Life of Christ* and a book of the lives of the saints in Spanish.

As he read these books over many times, he became rather fond of what he found written there. Putting his reading aside, he sometimes stopped to

think about the things he had read, or the things of the world that he used to think about before. Of the many vain ideas that came to him, one took such a hold on his heart that he became absorbed in thinking about it for a few hours without even realizing it. He imagined what he would do in the service of a certain lady: the means by which he would go to the country where she lived, the verses he would speak to her, the deeds of arms he would do in her service. He became so conceited with these thoughts that he did not consider that all of it would be impossible because the lady was not of the lower nobility, not a countess, not a duchess, but of a far higher station.

Nevertheless, Our Lord assisted him, causing other thoughts that arose from the things he read to follow these. While reading the life of Our Lord and of the saints, he stopped to think, reasoning within himself, "What if I should do what St. Francis did, what St. Dominic did?" So he pondered over many things that he found to be good, always proposing to himself what was difficult and serious, and as he proposed them, they seemed to him easy to accomplish. But his every thought was to say to himself, "St. Dominic did this, therefore, I have to do it. St. Francis did this, therefore, I have to do it." These thoughts also lasted a good while, but when other matters intervened, . . . worldly thoughts . . . returned, and he also spent much time on

them. This succession of such diverse thoughts, either of the worldly deeds he wished to achieve or of the deeds of God that came to his imagination, lasted for a long time, and he always dwelt at length on the thought before him, until he tired of it and put it aside and turned to other matters.

Yet there was this difference. When he was thinking about the things of the world, he took much delight in them, but afterwards, when he was tired and put them aside, he found that he was dry and discontented. But when he thought of going to Jerusalem, barefoot and eating nothing but herbs and undergoing all the other rigors that he saw the saints had endured, not only was he consoled when he had these thoughts, but even after putting them aside, he remained content and happy. He did not wonder, however, at this; nor did he stop to ponder the difference until one time his eyes were opened a little, and he began to marvel at the difference and to reflect upon it, realizing from experience that some thoughts left him sad and others happy. Little by little he came to recognize the difference between the spirits that agitated him, one from the demon, the other from God.

GOD IN ALL THINGS

This little story depicts the emergence of the core of Ignatian spirituality: the concept that God can be found in all things. If God can be discovered in daydreams, then God can be found anywhere. Moreover, we have in this story a description of the discernment of spirits in ordinary life, a description that lays to rest any theory that makes the discernment of spirits an esoteric or arcane spiritual discipline open only to the spiritually gifted and theologically trained. Ignatius was theologically ignorant and was so far from being spiritually gifted that even after this first discernment and a vision of the Madonna, he could not make up his mind about whether to kill a Moor or not, as the story from the next chapter of his autobiography attests.

Right after Ignatius left Loyola to take up his new life of following Jesus, the story goes, he and a Moor met on the road, both riding mules. They began to converse, and the conversation turned to the topic of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The Moor could imagine that Mary had conceived Jesus without benefit of a man, but he could not agree that she was a virgin after giving birth. Ignatius tried to dissuade him from this opinion but could not succeed. The Moor raced on ahead of Ignatius, probably sensing that Ignatius was getting hot under the collar. Then Ignatius began to think that he had not done enough to uphold the honor of Our Lady. The desire came over him to race after the Moor and strike him with his dagger. He couldn't discern what to do; he was in an agony of indecision. Finally, in desperation, he decided to let the mule make the decision for him. He let the reins go slack. If the mule followed the broad road to the town to which the Moor was heading, Ignatius

would seek him and strike him; if the mule kept to the road he was on, then Ignatius would let the Moor go. The mule kept to the road he was on. Obviously, Ignatius had not immediately become a master of discernment.

ELEMENTS OF DISCERNMENT

Nonetheless, with the first discernment Ignatius made on his sickbed, we have the essential elements for the understanding of Ignatian discernment. Life is a battleground, and the stakes are enormous. The two great protagonists in the battle are God and Satan. Both are in a dialogical relationship with all human beings, but for absolutely different ends. God wants all human beings to live as God's sons and daughters, as brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. In other words, God wants all human beings to be saved, and God is working all the time in this world to achieve that end. Satan diametrically opposes God's purpose. He wants to estrange all human beings not only from God but also from one another. The prizes of the battle are the hearts and minds of human beings.

Thus, for Ignatius, the struggle is dialogical. God is trying to attract human beings to enter the community of the Trinity, and Satan is trying to draw us away from that community. The influences of the two great protagonists can be discerned in ordinary human experience. Thus, for Ignatius, nothing in human experience is insignificant: at every moment, God and Satan are at work. Careful attention to inner experience is therefore a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality. Such attention is absolutely necessary if the individual wants to know God's desires for him or her.

This aspect of Ignatian spirituality has great relevance for our own age. But another aspect of that spirituality may be much more difficult for us. At Manresa, Ignatius was tutored by God and gradually became a master of discernment. During his months of prayer there, he became convinced that God wanted him to live out his days in Jerusalem—and so, with characteristic single-mindedness, he went there. As the *Autobiography* states, "His firm intention was to remain in Jerusalem continually visiting the holy places, and, in addition to this devotion, he also planned to help souls." When the provincial of the Franciscans told him that he could not remain, Ignatius told him quite frankly that he was determined to stay. Only when the provincial threatened him with excommunication did Ignatius agree to obey, concluding that "it was not Our Lord's will that he remain in those holy places. . . ."

One commentator on the rules for discernment, Leo Baaker, maintains that Ignatius's decision to remain in Jerusalem was made around the time of his vision by the Cardoner River and was an election in the "first time"—that is, an election in

which "God our Lord so moves and attracts the will that a devout soul without hesitation, or the possibility of hesitation, follows what has been manifested to it" (*Spiritual Exercises*, #175). According to Baaker, the decision of the provincial in Jerusalem presented Ignatius with the dilemma of trying to figure out how a decision that was clearly God's (his election to stay in Jerusalem) could be contrary to another decision that was clearly God's (the provincial's decision). In Baaker's view, reflection on this question led to the eighth of the Rules or Discernment appropriate to the second week of the *Exercises* (#336), in which Ignatius cautions the exercitant to distinguish carefully between the moment of a consolation without previous cause and the succeeding moments. Baaker also traces the Rules for Thinking with the Church in the *Spiritual Exercises* to this experience in Jerusalem. For Ignatius, authority in the church was clearly a mediator of the will of God. Discernment of spirits was always in creative tension with obedience to legitimate authority as a means of knowing God's will. For many modern Christians, Catholics among them, authority does not have the same sharp relevance that it had for Ignatius. Many would find inexplicable the complete acquiescence of a man of his obvious strength of character to the provincial's authority. Yet Ignatian discernment must be understood as embedded in the belief that the Catholic church mediates the will of God. Ignatian spirituality is decidedly realistic as well as Catholic. Discernment takes place in the real world, where not all things are possible, and in the Catholic church, where legitimate authority may have the final word.

I want to develop at greater length some of the central elements of Ignatian discernment of spirits. First, it must be understood against the background of the First Principle and Foundation, the *Fundamentum* so brilliantly elucidated in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* by Joseph Tetlow. Tetlow argues that behind the seemingly dry and catechismlike words of Ignatius lies an experience of God's creative and continually creating activity. I have found the philosophy of action of the Scottish philosopher John Macmurray particularly helpful in understanding what Ignatius intended with the *Fundamentum*. Macmurray comes to the conclusion that the universe is the one action of God, an action governed by one intention. We only know anyone's intention through that person's revelation; a fortiori, we can only know God's intention through revelation. Christians believe that God has revealed God's intention in Christ Jesus. At least we can say that God has revealed God's intention for our world, whatever may be said of the whole universe. God's intention, it seems, is that all human beings live as brothers and sisters in a community of faith, hope and love, united with Jesus Christ as sons and daughters of God, our

The core of Ignatian spirituality is the concept that God can be found in all things

Father, and in harmony with the whole created universe. In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul puts it this way:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Eph. 1:3, 9-10)

I have argued elsewhere (in *Paying Attention to God: Discernment in Prayer*) that this one action of God can be understood as the Kingdom of God, the central theme of the preaching of Jesus. God is always actively bringing about God's Kingdom, and we can be in tune, out of tune, or more or less in tune with God's intention. With absolute clarity and consequentiality, Ignatius saw that for our own best interest and blessedness we need to be in tune with God's one action. Here are his words in the First Principle and Foundation:

Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. The other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him in attaining the end for which he is created. Hence, man is to make use of them in as far as they help him in the attainment of his end, and he must rid himself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to him. Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, as far as we are allowed free choice and are not under any prohibition. Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short life. The same holds for all other things. Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created. (*Spiritual Exercises* #23)

Signs of Being Out of Tune with God



Let me paraphrase the first two sentences in the language of this article: Human beings are created for community with the Trinity and hence with one another; all the other things on the face of the earth are created to help us attain this community. We have to understand this statement not as an external demand put on human beings by a sovereign God but as an expression of what is for our good. The *Spiritual Exercises* are a means of becoming attuned to God's one action and intention, of be-

coming contemplatives in action—people who literally find God in all things, even in the hurly-burly of everyday life.

TOWARD UNION WITH GOD

Historically, the purpose of the *Exercises* has been understood in two different senses. In one, the aim of union with God was stressed; in the other, the discovery of God's will was emphasized. Like

Baaker and other modern commentators, I prefer to join the two and see the *Exercises* as a means of helping exercitants toward union with God in action. Baaker notes, for example, that for Ignatius consolation was not primarily a pleasant and moving emotion, an encouragement to continue on a chosen path, or a help in prayer. Consolation may be all of these, but first and foremost it is an experience that makes it possible to know and choose the will of God:

From the time of the illumination at Cardoner the discernment of inner movements and consolation flow together with the election (e.g., the choice of a way of life) for Ignatius. The fact that Ignatius reflexively emphasizes this flowing together of consolation and election and then methodically works it out as the center and source of the spiritual life is the new element brought into the history of spirituality by the *Spiritual Exercises*.

In other words, in Ignatian spirituality, union with God occurs in the decision to act in a certain way and in the action itself. In Macmurray's terminology, we become one with God insofar as we are in tune with the one action of God in our own actions. To put it another way, we become one with God insofar as our actions are in tune with the Kingdom of God.

In the *Autobiography*, Ignatius tells us that he learned to distrust consolations that came to him as he was about to go to sleep. These consolations kept him from what little sleep he had allotted himself.

Wondering about this at times he thought to himself that he had assigned much time for converse with God and all the rest of the day as well, and he began to doubt, therefore, whether that enlightenment came from a good spirit; he concluded that it would be better to ignore it and to sleep for the appointed time. And so he did.

Later, in Barcelona and in Paris, he found that consolations kept him from paying attention in class or from memorizing his grammar lessons. Gradually he came to the conclusion that these consolations were temptations. This demonstrates that even profound spiritual consolations can constitute temptations because of their deleterious effects on action that one has discerned to be in tune with God's one action. Asceticism requires that one eschew such consolations in order to be in union with God.

For Ignatius, discernment of spirits became so important in ordinary life that he frequently made exams of his consciousness. Moreover, he would allow a Jesuit to miss any spiritual exercises for the sake of the apostolate except the examen of consciousness. For Ignatius, the examen functioned much as does the period of reflection after each prayer time in the *Spiritual Exercises*. A period of

the day could be considered a time of encountering the different spirits, so he reflected on that period to discover the movements of the spirits.

THE GOOD SPIRIT

For our own good, God desires that each of us be in tune with God's one action in our actions. In our best moments, we too desire to be in tune with God's action. How do we know whether we are or not? I believe that when we are out of tune with God's one action, we experience ourselves as alienated, unhappy, and unfulfilled, even though we do not know the source of the malaise. These feelings of malaise are, I believe, what Ignatius calls the actions of the "good spirit" in his first rule for the discernment of spirits.

In the case of those who go from one mortal sin to another, the enemy is ordinarily accustomed to propose apparent pleasures. He fills their imagination with sensual delights and gratifications, the more readily to keep them in their vices and increase the number of their sins.

With such persons the good spirit uses a method which is the reverse of the above. Making use of the light of reason, he will rouse the sting of conscience and fill them with remorse. (*Spiritual Exercises* #314)

In other words, when I am out of tune with the one action of God—when I am acting predominantly out of fear for myself and therefore against the community of the Trinity, rather than out of love for others—I experience the action of God as a rasping of my spirit. It is a sting of conscience in my good moments, a sting I try to anesthetize as much as possible in my bad moments. God continually acts in the universe to draw all of us into community with the Trinity and with one another. When we act counter to that action, we experience ourselves as somehow at odds with ourselves and others. In this understanding there is no need of special interventions by God or the good spirit, although we may experience the one action of God as an external intervention.

The perpetual attraction of such myths as the pursuit of the Holy Grail indicates the depth of the human desire to be in tune with God's intention. The Kingdom meditation of the *Spiritual Exercises* is one such myth; in modern times it has been captured in J. R. R. Tolkien's wonderful trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*. These myths touch a chord deep within us that may well be the Spirit of God who dwells in our hearts. The second rule for the discernment of spirits in the *Exercises* speaks of "those who go on earnestly striving to cleanse their souls from sin and who seek to rise in the service of God our Lord to greater perfection." In our terminology, these are people who are achieving their desire to attune their actions with the one action of God. In this case, Ignatius says,

The best criterion by which to discern that we are in tune with God's action in our life is the sense of a developing inner and outer harmony

it is characteristic of the evil spirit to harass with anxiety, to afflict with sadness, to raise obstacles backed by fallacious reasonings that disturb the soul. Thus he seeks to prevent the soul from advancing.

It is characteristic of the good spirit, however, to give courage and strength, consolations, tears, inspirations, and peace. This He does by making all easy, by removing all obstacles so that the soul goes forward in doing good. (*Spiritual Exercises* #315)

UPDATING THE IMAGERY

How can we make sense of this for our times? In "Toward a Theology of Discernment," I put it this way:

If you have ever experienced a time when you were "in the flow," able to live with relative unambivalence and lack of fear in the now, attuned to the presence of God, then you have an idea of what it might be like to be at one with the one action of God. In such a state you are a contemplative in action. You know that you are at the right place at the right time. There are no doubts about whether you should be someone else or somewhere else. You do not need to justify being a married man or woman or a religious; it is right to be who you are here and now. And you live and act comfortably with the knowledge of your own limitations, of your finitude, of your small part in the immense history of the world. To be attuned to the one action of God, to his will, is to be extraordinarily free, happy and fulfilled even in the midst of a world of sorrow and pain. One can, perhaps, understand how Jesus could celebrate the Last Supper even though he knew in his bones that it would be "last."

In *Gift from the Sea*, Ann Morrow Lindbergh likens a good relationship to good dance. It is, in her words,

built on some of the same rules. The partners do not

need to hold on tightly, because they move confidently in the same pattern. . . . To touch heavily would be to arrest the pattern and freeze the movement. . . . There is no place here for the possessive clutch, the clinging arm, the heavy hand; only the barest touch in passing. Now arm in arm, now face to face, now back to back—it does not matter which. Because they know they are partners moving to the same rhythm, creating a pattern together, and being invisibly nourished by it. The joy of such a pattern is not only the joy of creation or the joy of participation, it is also the joy of living in the moment. Lightness of touch and living in the moment are intertwined. One cannot dance well unless one is completely in time with the music, not leaning back to the last step or pressing forward to the next one, but poised directly on the present step as it comes. Perfect poise on the beat is what gives good dancing its sense of ease, of timelessness, of the eternal.

This description of good dance seems to fit our experience of God when we are in tune with God's one intention—that is, when we are living as much as possible as brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus. And we are like clumsy dancers when we are out of tune with God's one intention. These images coincide remarkably well with what Ignatius describes as consolation and desolation. We can also recall the term the Greek Fathers used to describe the mutual indwelling of the Three Persons of the Trinity: *perichoresis*, which literally means dancing around. Theologians say of the Three Persons that the only thing that distinguishes them from one another is their mutual relationship. The best metaphor the Greek theologians could come up with for this mutuality of relationships was the dance. Quite apart from creation, in other words, the one God is dance, the perfect community which we call Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are so perfectly related that nothing distinguishes them except their mutual relationship.

Thus, the experience of God as dance may reflect an encounter with God's one action that is the universe. In other words, when our actions are in tune with God's one action, with its intention that all human beings live as sisters and brothers, we experience ourselves as being in the flow, living in the present with a relative freedom from fear of the future or past. When our actions are out of tune with God's one action, we experience a malaise, a disharmony. And if we let that disharmony into our consciousness, we know that we need help and we address "a higher power" (as the first step of Alcoholics Anonymous refers to God)—a Thou by whom alone we can be saved. In addition, the experience of God as dance may reflect an encounter with God, who is *in se* the perfect dance—the Mystery who is Three in One.

CONSOLATION INVITES SALVATION

To be in tune with the dance, with God's one

action that is the universe, is to experience what Ignatius calls consolation.

I call it consolation when an interior movement is aroused in the soul, by which it is inflamed with love of its Creator and Lord, and as a consequence, can love no creature on the face of the earth for its own sake, but only in the Creator of them all. It is likewise consolation when one sheds tears that move to the love of God, whether it be because of sorrow for sins, or because of the sufferings of Christ our Lord, or for any other reason that is immediately directed to the praise and service of God. Finally, I call consolation every increase of faith, hope, and love, and all interior joy that invites and attracts to what is heavenly and to the salvation of one's soul by filling it with peace and quiet in its Creator and Lord. (*Spiritual Exercises* #316)

Josef Sudbrack, in *Unterscheidung der Geister*, suggests that Erik Erikson's modern concept of identity covers inner experiences similar to those surrounding consolation. In *Identity, Youth, and Crisis*, Erikson describes identity as "an invigorating sameness and continuity" and indicates that what William James called "character" in a letter to his wife means the same as Erikson's concept of identity. James wrote:

A man's character is discernible in the mental or moral attitude in which, when it came upon him, he felt himself most deeply and intensely active and alive. At such moments there is a voice inside which speaks and says: "*This is the real me!*" [Such experience always includes] an element of active tension, of holding my own, as it were, and trusting outward things to perform their part so as to make it a full harmony, but without any *guaranty* that they will. Make it a guaranty . . . and the attitude immediately becomes to my consciousness stagnant and stingless. Take away the guaranty, and I feel . . . a sort of deep enthusiastic bliss, of bitter willingness to do and suffer anything . . . and which, although it is a mere mood or emotion to which I can give no form in words, authenticates itself to me as the deepest principle of all active, and theoretic determination which I possess.

Thus, the best criterion by which to discern that we are in tune with God's action in our life is the sense of a developing inner and outer harmony—a growing sense of one's own self as distinct from, yet related harmoniously to, important other people, including one's God. Someone who, with the help of God's grace, has come to the point of being able to discern in this way is very close to being a contemplative in action.

On his sickbed Ignatius had two sets of daydreams that had different repercussions in his emotional life. One day he noticed the difference and then decided that one set of daydreams was from God, the other not. Yet God was also in the worldly daydreams, as the spirit that left him feeling disconsolate afterwards. From these simple beginnings Ignatian spirituality developed. Ignatius learned from experience that God could be found in all things. The phrase "finding God in all things" has become a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality. What Ignatius learned on his sickbed and later is part of the heritage of the church's tradition. It still has relevance for our own time. We must only begin to pay attention to our experience and ask where God may be found in it.

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Corporate Identity Guides Religious Formation Process

Rhea Emmer, C.S.A., M.A.Sp., and Patricia Hayes, C.S.A., M.A.P.S.

Prior to Vatican II, the Congregation of Saint Agnes had a strong corporate identity characterized by common dress, schedule, and expression of spirituality, as well as by a ministry directed at education and health care. Religious identity within the corporate culture was well-defined; everyone knew what it meant to be a Sister of Saint Agnes. Women entering formation had a clear experience of leaving one life-style and being initiated into another that stressed structure and the common experience of religious life. But as the congregation began the renewal process and entered the breakdown stage of the life cycle of a religious community, its sense of corporate identity and purpose became unclear. During that period, formators attempted to provide a more personalized approach to the formative process by incorporating the insights of psychology and renewed theology. The religious identity within the Congregation of Saint Agnes (C.S.A.) was in such transition, however, that it was not clear how to convey to entrants what it meant to be a member of that community. This article shares the story of one congregation's attempt to name its emerging corporate identity and to describe the impact of that identity on the initial formation process. This process is part of what Raymond Fitz and Lawrence Cada identify, in *Shaping the Coming Age of Religious Life*, as the "new venture and reintegration phase" of the path of transformation.

RENEWAL OF CHARISM

As the congregation moved beyond the instability of the breakdown period, through the challenge of the critical period, and into revitalization, the members experienced—in their own personal conversions—a resurgence of faith and a groundedness in Christ through the renewal of the founders' charism. This renewal called for a transforming

response to the signs of the times. With the involvement of the entire membership, a rearticulation of the emerging corporate identity was initiated and manifested in various forms. The constitutions—the expression of our lived experience of religious life—were rewritten and approved. The general chapter of 1985 stated that we would focus our missions on helping the poor and furthering the role of women in church and society. These objectives would be accomplished through increased collaboration with others and the reevaluation of our priorities for ministry planning. In 1986 the membership was involved in the development of a statement of congregational mission. A strategic plan was developed according to the Xavier University planning model. Specific objectives for formation were identified; one of these was to articulate a philosophy of formation that would incorporate the essential elements of our way of religious life in light of our emerging corporate identity and be integrated into the guided phases of formation through temporary profession.

The formation committee—composed of the directresses of vocations and of prenovitiate, novitiate, and temporary vows, the coordinator of ongoing formation, and a health care representative to the formation committee—met monthly to reflect on, and then to undertake, the articulation of this philosophy.

STATEMENT ASSURES CONTINUITY

A statement of our way of religious life in the congregation was developed. This document outlines the essentials of what it means to be a Sister of St. Agnes in terms of beliefs and attitudes. Fundamental to the formative process is a reflective way of living that manifests itself in the quality of relationships with God, self, and others. With this statement serving as a point of reference,

objective criteria were developed that clearly state the specific expectations at each level of formation. Their purpose is to provide continuity within the formation process as the women journey toward full incorporation. They also encourage an approach to formation that is focused more on the communal personality and less on the personality of the individual directress. These objective criteria were later titled "Signs of Readiness for Completion of the Guided Phases."

The signs of readiness are behavioral and indicate the women's level of integration, as well as the degree of intellectual and affective development anticipated, as they move toward the completion of each phase. The women's levels of investment at the various phases reflect their progression from an initial awareness of their religious identity to an ongoing integration of that identity. For example, the level of investment at the completion of the prenovitiate phase is acceptance of the elements of religious life. This is manifested in a cognitive understanding of the elements of the C.S.A. religious life and an affective compatibility with it. The level of investment at the completion of the novitiate anticipates the internalization of a religious identity, manifested in a cognitive understanding of the C.S.A. vowed life and an affective resonance with C.S.A.'s religious way of life.

The signs of readiness are intended to be an objective mirror of each woman's level of compatibility with the congregation's corporate identity and mission. In other words, is the woman's personal identity being enhanced and enriched as she embraces a religious way of life and a religious identity in this congregation? Further, can she be entrusted with the responsibility of carrying C.S.A.'s mission and charism into the future?

Impact on Initial Formation. In order to actualize the signs of readiness, the entire curriculum was redesigned to focus on appropriate theory while being sensitive to the women's ability to discern and experience their own inner movements. The evaluation process was revised to correlate with the signs of readiness and to focus on behaviors that reflect the degree of internalization of the C.S.A. way of life.

Impact on Formative Relationships. The women have voiced their appreciation of the clarity of expectations and the degree to which their attainment is measurable. This has alleviated fears of hidden agendas and surprises at evaluation time. Additionally, it has fostered within the women a willingness to trust their own experience of vulnerability in order to grow during the formative process. Directresses indicate that the signs of readiness and the statement of our way of life better enable them to assess the women's growth toward religious identification. They also provide consis-

tent goals for the women as they move through the various levels of formation.

Impact on Vocation Promotion. The statement of our way of life and the signs of readiness were discussed at a meeting of the regional vocation chairpersons and representative committee members. This clarified for the participants the various stages of internalization of a religious identity that are found in the initial formative process for the C.S.A. The experience of sharing personal insights awakened in the participants a new appreciation of their sense of a call and renewed their commitment to vocation ministry. As a result of the meeting, a mission statement for vocation ministry was formulated, and a three-year strategic plan was developed in order to focus and coordinate our approach to vocation ministry throughout our U.S. congregation. A list of desirable qualities in potential members was also drawn up to assist the members in discerning whom to invite.

It is too soon to assess the long-term impact of this approach. Annually, the women in initial formation are invited to evaluate how closely their experience corresponds to the stated goals of the process. This is especially important as more women of culturally diverse backgrounds choose to enter the formation process. The need to educate the perpetually professed members about this factor in the congregation's new venture and reintegration phase of the path of transformation remains a critical, continuing formation issue. Experience continues to validate our premise that without a discernible corporate identity, it is difficult for a community to invite women to make a commitment to its way of life and to sustain the initial formative process. The challenge before us is to create a climate in which our emerging corporate identity can continue to be a source of revitalization for the entire congregation.



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Evolving Religious Formation

Joel Giallanza, C.S.C., M.A.

The formation of religious from the novitiate onwards need not be planned according to the same pattern for all institutes, but account must be taken of the specific character of each institute. In revising and adapting this formation, a sufficient measure of prudent experimentation should take place.

Perfectae Caritatis, October 28, 1965

As regards the formation to be imparted in the novitiate in Institutes dedicated to the works of the apostolate, it is evident that greater attention should be paid to preparing the novices, in the very beginning and more directly, for the type of life or the activities which will be theirs in the future, and to teaching them how to realize in their lives in progressive stages that cohesive unity whereby contemplation and apostolic activity are closely linked together, a unity which is one of the most fundamental and primary values of these same societies.

Renovationis Causam, January 6, 1969

This decade will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the texts quoted above. The significance of this historical point lies not in the texts themselves but in the evolution they generated in religious formation. Formators point to these texts as representative expressions of priorities that have shaped formation programs and processes in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Revised constitutions and the changing profile of those seeking entrance into religious life also have a place among those priorities. While formators encounter the

evolution of formation on a regular basis through their involvement with programs and personnel, they also recognize that there has not been an effective and widespread education of religious about the fundamental shifts that have taken place in the ministry of formation. The lack of education has sometimes caused confusion among the membership as they wonder about the components of a particular program, and frustration for formators as they attempt to explain the principles underlying a particular approach or program design.

Twenty-five years is a natural point at which to take stock of the evolution in formation—not by way of evaluation, but as a means to promote education that will enable all religious to be fluent with the formation practices in apostolic communities. This article focuses on four areas that have been especially influenced by the evolution in formation. That evolution will definitely shape the future of religious life, especially as those who have been through formation programs over the last twenty-five years move into positions of authority in their congregations. The four areas to be examined here are the environment in which formation takes place, the approach to the individual in formation, the nature of formation programs, and the theology of vocation within formation.

FORMATION ENVIRONMENT

Environment refers to more than the type of building in which the formation program is

housed, although that has been affected. The decreasing size of groups, combined with the increasing size of maintenance costs, has led religious communities to find alternate settings for their own programs or to participate regularly in inter-community formation programs. Here, I use the word *environment* to refer to the tone and setting in which formation takes place. The evolution that has taken place in this area could be described as a movement from monastery to marketplace. It must be noted that by *monastery* I mean not the traditional residence of contemplative religious but the type of environment that apostolic religious communities created for those in initial formation. Admittedly, for many years that environment did reflect contemplative religious life, even though it was preparation for life in an apostolic congregation. The implementation of *Perfectae Caritatis* and *Renovationis Causam* had a great deal to do with creating a formation environment appropriate to the style of life undertaken after initial formation.

The movement from monastery to marketplace highlights the central position of mission in apostolic religious life. This is confirmed in the revised constitutions and mission statements that have been the work of general and provincial chapters for several years. The work undertaken by religious to articulate the principles and priorities within those constitutions and mission statements has laid the foundation for the development of an apostolic spirituality. The environment in which formation takes place focuses on the importance of mission. From entrance onward, the top priority for apostolic religious is to be committed to, and involved in, the continuation of Jesus' mission. The challenge, then, is to adopt the means necessary to provide quality time for prayer and community while maintaining competence in ministry. In this regard, the development of an apostolic spirituality would be of tremendous support, not just for those in formation but for all apostolic religious.

While formators applaud the movement from monastery to marketplace, they also acknowledge that in initial formation, some personality types will respond to the environmental focus on mission by neglecting or compromising the importance of prayer and community. Even while in formation, it is possible for a candidate to be a workaholic, to the detriment of his or her participation in the formation community. This is further complicated by the emphasis on ministerial involvement for apostolic religious, which provides a ready justification for reduced presence and participation. Thus, formators necessarily establish expectations for ministry, prayer, and community so that those in initial formation will have some guidance in building a healthy and balanced use of their time.

The evolution in the formation environment during the past twenty-five years has reflected the priorities that religious communities have sought

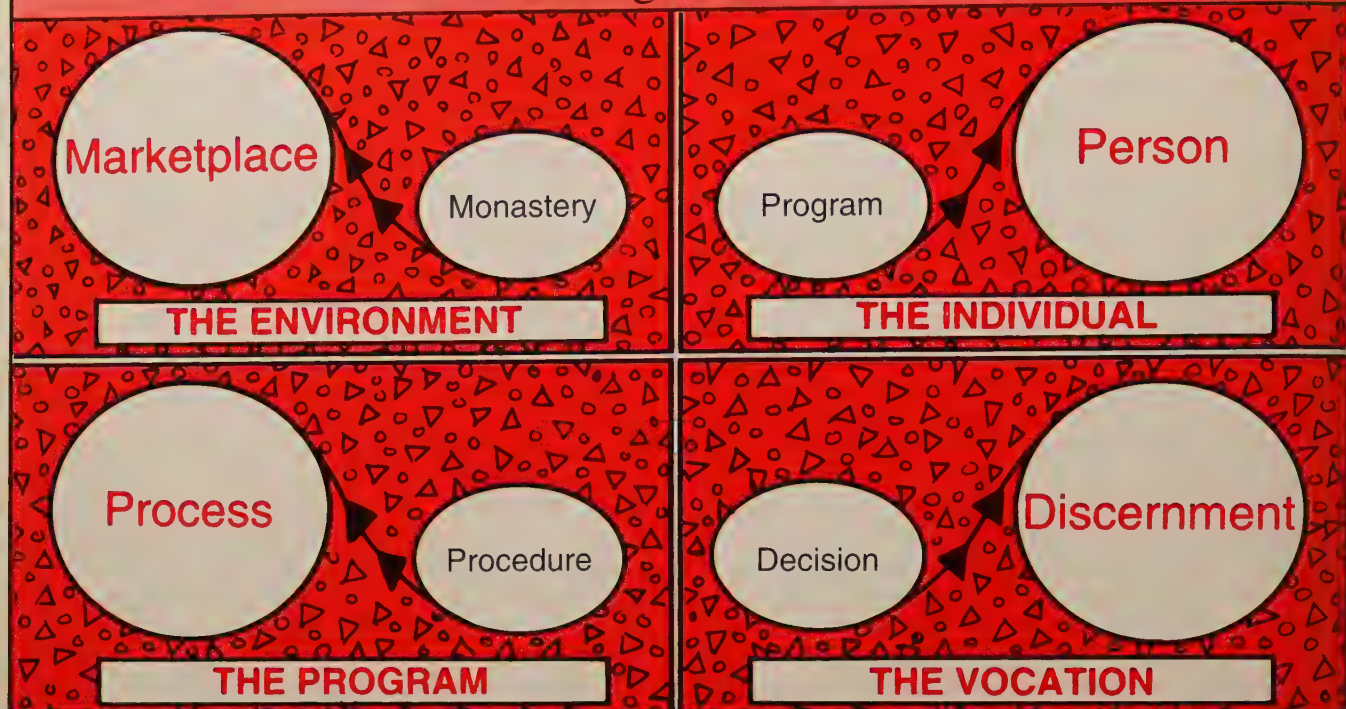
to instill in those who would shape the future. Clearly, the primacy of mission reflects the witness that apostolic religious seek to live in society. However, that witness will diminish to the degree that apostolic religious do not embrace its fundamental communal nature. The world stands in much need of a corporate witness to proclaim that love among peoples is a genuine possibility. The world cannot afford to lose that proclamation. The movement from monastery to marketplace has been a necessary one. Formators must ensure that those in initial formation understand that it is a move that must be made together with other community members.

INDIVIDUAL IN FORMATION

Individual refers to the evolution in the approach taken with those in formation over the past two and a half decades. It goes far beyond the scope of these reflections to encompass the demographic shifts in profile of those who have entered or are entering religious life. Generally, those now entering are older, have more education, have some experience in making a living, and are accustomed to some independence in their decision making and use of time. These characteristics, however, are not to be equated with greater maturity. Formators readily recognize the implications of bringing together several such individuals in a well-defined, structured prenovitiate or novitiate. The evolution in environment, combined with the changing demographics of those seeking entrance into religious life, have necessitated an evolution in approach to the individual in formation. The evolution that has taken place in this area could be described as a movement from program to person.

The movement from program to person highlights the importance of personal development and the affirmation of individual gifts. This is confirmed by the importance given to psychological testing prior to or during the prenovitiate. It would be unfair to look upon such testing as beneficial only for the congregation. Testing that is given with the good of the person in mind and that communicates results to the individual in some form can be a rich exercise in self-knowledge. In earlier times, formation programs remained relatively unchanged from year to year. Many things that would today be called talents and gifts were often not given the chance to flourish because of "custodies" that affected almost every aspect of life. This is not to deny that those programs produced some very holy people among the ranks of religious but simply to point out that the approach to the individual has changed significantly over the past twenty-five years. As well as being a movement from program to person, it may also be called a movement from exterior to interior formation. The starting point is not the curriculum and sched-

Evolving Emphases in Religious Formation Observed During the Past 25 Years



ule of the program (exterior) but the gifts and potentials of the person (interior). Formation is the ministry of blending the two together.

The wisdom of the movement from program to person is readily acknowledged, yet it does have a shadow side to which formators must be attentive. The focus on personal development and individual gifts, if not seasoned with humility and directed toward mission, could draw a person into becoming a ministerial and communal "black hole." Everything would be interpreted and evaluated through the prism of what is most beneficial to the individual, with little consideration for others, the world, and creation itself. The movement from program to person places a high priority on self-knowledge and on the discipline necessary to acquire, deepen, and maintain it throughout life. However, that priority and discipline must be placed in the context of apostolic and communal religious life if they are to bear the light of the gospel for mission.

The evolution in the approach to the individual within formation during the past twenty-five years has emphasized that religious life is people—individuals with specific gifts, talents, dreams, and hopes. The transforming power of those qualities will be aimless unless they are focused and directed toward the continuation of Jesus' mission. The

movement from program to person has highlighted the richness and diversity of humanity, made in the image and likeness of God. Formators must take care that those in initial formation understand that this richness is most clearly seen within the diversity among individuals' personalities and the services into which religious life invites them.

FORMATION PROGRAM

Program refers to the basic design and philosophy of formation. Both of these elements have undergone an evolution that has shaped the activities scheduled during initial formation. The roots of that design and philosophy were nurtured in the discussions surrounding the implementation of *Perfectae Caritatis* and *Renovationis Causam*. The evolution that has occurred in this area could be described as a movement from procedure to process. In discussing program-related issues, formators often refer to the lack of education among religious regarding present-day formation. Formators are often confronted with expressions of amazement and puzzlement from community members after making a presentation on a particular program. "You mean that the candidates (or novices) can do that?" "Well, it wasn't that way in my day." "No wonder they're all leaving." "What's

this community coming to?" It is important for religious to know that formation undergoes regular adjustments based on the individuals who enter the program and on church and congregational directives. This evolution will continue.

The movement from procedure to process highlights integration as the central work for those in religious formation. Incorporation into a religious community involves more than proficiency at certain activities. It involves a formation of the heart that affects the attitudes and preferences by which the person sets priorities and makes decisions. Integration reveals motivation; *that* something is done is usually much less revealing than *why* it is done. Formation cannot be reduced to a polished performance and maintain its privileged position as the initiation for an evangelical way of life. Even though this integration is undertaken in a communal setting, the process has always been tailored to the individual. There is no magic here; the Lord deals with each person as a unique creature of a loving God. Each person's history is called forth and probed by God's transforming grace, so the gifts born of that history may be cultured for mission within the heritage of a particular congregation. This process is verified by the fact that candidates and novices speak readily about the ups and downs of formation in general, but identify few common experiences regarding the personal, spiritual, and affective influences that formation has on them. As always, on the deepest level, the Lord alone remains the principal formator.

Formators are aware of the sensitivities necessary for such a ministry—sensitivities that must be attuned to the intangibles that signal development and progress. What makes this yet more complex is that those intangibles vary from one person to another. While there are norms to be implemented and behaviors to be expected within formation, formators note the difficulty of establishing universal criteria for use during evaluation periods. This is admittedly a weak link in the evolution of formation programs. It is not, however, an irreparable problem. It has been addressed and continues to be addressed, at least in part, by the quality of preparation that most religious communities ask of those who will begin formation ministry. The lack of clear, universal criteria is not solely a formation issue. It is only one part of the identity issue discussed by religious in recent years. As religious communities articulate more clearly the nature and means of their witness, formation programs will be able to establish criteria that will animate that witness within those seeking incorporation.

The evolution in formation programs during the past twenty-five years has brought together the practical dimensions of many disciplines, including the developmental sciences. Formation is much more a process of progressive incorporation into religious life than a procedure to be completed

The evolution in the approach to the individual within formation has emphasized that religious life is people

once and for all. The focus of this process is to enable the individual to integrate the principles and practices of religious life within a particular congregation. The movement from procedure to process has brought new challenges to both formators and those in formation. Formators must strive to help those in initial formation understand the importance of living the religious life from within, with the integrity that must mark those committed to carrying on Jesus' mission.

VERIFYING THE VOCATION

Vocation refers to the means by which the call to religious life is verified by formators and by those in formation. This area is not related to the trends and statistics of church vocations in recent decades; rather, it begins at the prenovitiate level. In previous eras, the environment, the approach to the individual, and the program itself were designed in such a way that there seemed to be a common profile of professed religious: what they looked like, what ministries they were involved in, and what basic values they held. A decision on further incorporation could be made on the basis of whether or not an individual had reached a predetermined level of proficiency. In substance, that is still true today. However, the means of arriving at that decision have changed. The level of proficiency is more fluid; it varies from one individual to the next. The evolution that has occurred in this area could be described as a movement from decision to discernment. This evolution has generated the very

rich concept of continuing formation, which religious include in their revised constitutions as an element essential to maintaining their spiritual, personal, communal, and ministerial lives.

The movement from decision to discernment highlights the respect necessary to understand the workings of the Lord within the life of an individual. The pace of the individual's response to those workings is a variable that must be taken into account as formation progresses. This is not to say that no expectations can be set by formators—only that expectations must be consistent and appropriate for the individual at any given developmental point. This movement has transformed the kind of training necessary to foster competence in the ministry of formation. Experience in the life of the congregation is surely a solid foundation, but it must be amplified by some understanding of progression in the spiritual life, of personality types and how they interact with other types, and of the society with which candidates and novices are most familiar. It is no wonder that communities do not have a waiting list of members who would like to enter the ministry of formation. Although formation (particularly in the novitiate) may be described as an intense retreat, formators will testify that it is also intense work. The work does bear fruit, however, as formators see the energy and integrity with which the newly professed enter the life of the congregation.

Discernment is hardly new within the church and religious life. It reflects the wisdom and the ways of understanding the movements of the Spirit within a person's life, and it holds a privileged position in the mystical tradition of the church. Recognizing and integrating those movements of the Spirit take time, since the person undergoes conversion and transformation as the progression toward union with the Lord unfolds. And time is a potential culprit. Religious communities establish time lines for the stages of incorporation, and appropriately so. Difficulties can emerge when those time lines need to be extended repeatedly to accommodate the pace of an individual's continuing discernment. Formators take up the challenge of working with such individuals to determine the roots of their hesitancy about commitment. It is inappropriate to assume that every individual who requests additional time in initial formation is reluctant to make a lifelong commitment. But it is not inappropriate for communities, through their formators, to probe the question.

The evolution in the understanding of vocation during the past twenty-five years has enriched the methods by which the ministry of formation can assist individuals in discovering the presence and activity of the Lord in their lives. That discovery becomes a foundation and a catalyst for further development and deepening of the person's vocation. The movement from decision to discernment

has intensified the initiatives that must be taken by formators and those in formation. Formators must help those in initial formation recognize the point toward which they are moving, request whatever assistance and support they need, and resolve to seek the Lord's will for themselves without getting stalled along the way.

THE EVOLUTION CONTINUES

The areas of formation ministry examined here are not its only dimensions, but they are areas that will continue to evolve. The understanding of vocation within formation will be affected by the changing identity and role of religious in the church. The discernment necessary to embrace the vocation will be built upon the integrity with which persons seek to live that identity and role. The design of programs within formation will be affected by the number and profile of individuals seeking entrance and by the directives that congregations implement in response to their changing identities and roles. The process necessary to make those programs as effective as possible will be built upon the adaptability of both the individuals and the directives. The approach to the individual within formation will be affected by the changing demographics of those who enter religious life. The person will remain the point of convergence for the discernment and the process, so that gifts can be tapped and potentials realized. The environment in which formation takes place will be affected and determined by the preceding factors. The marketplace will continue to be the principal arena in which the identity and role of apostolic religious is lived and redefined, so that the mission of Jesus maintains its primacy within religious life.

Whatever the future shape of religious formation and religious life, the Lord's gracious guidance will remain constant, as it has throughout the centuries. That may be the only certainty to which formators can look for assurance in the effectiveness of their ministry. It is a certainty that is seen only in faith, claimed only with hope, and lived only through love. As the evolution goes on, it is a certainty that will not pass away, for it stands on the authority of the gospel itself.



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Women's Communities in the Future

Maria Edwards, R.S.M., M.Ed., M.A.

Over the last ten years I have been privileged to offer counseling and spiritual direction to numerous women religious from different congregations. One result of these enriching encounters is this article, which concerns the need, desire, or spiritual calling of some sisters to live alone for a period of time. The six sisters who expressed to me the desire to live alone were in their midlife years and, in my judgment, emotionally healthy.

Interestingly, in seeking to live alone, all six of them met with some form of opposition from their governing bodies. I was deeply touched as they struggled to pray through their processes of discernment. Three sisters eventually were granted their requests, two found alternate ways to meet their needs for solitude, and one chose to ask for a leave of absence from her order.

It seems that leadership is often reluctant to accommodate sisters who feel they need to live alone for a period of time. Some province teams state that finances prohibit such a choice. Others believe that sisters would experience too much aloneness and loneliness in solitude. The majority of leaders would probably claim that community living means physical togetherness, and therefore that religious ought to live with other religious, except when living alone seems advisable for reasons of emotional health or ministry.

COMMON LIFE OR COMMUNITY

Contemporary leaders of apostolic orders tend to view the common life as essential to religious life. Generally, houses are formed exclusively of the

congregation's members, who live under a superior or coordinator. Members may share a common life that is mostly uniform in its various aspects. Many sisters who are not in leadership positions would agree that the common life is the only way of living religious life to its fullest.

In her book *New Wineskins*, Sandra Schneiders asserts that there is very little historical basis, and no theological foundation, for such a conclusion. If Schneiders is accurate in her assessment, the questions for women religious facing the twenty-first century might be: What styles or forms of religious life are relevant and life-giving for today and tomorrow? What shapes might future forms assume?

The thesis of this article is that the common life and community are two separate aspects of religious life. Schneiders states that the linking together of community with the common life, as defined in the 1917 code of canon law, is a historic development. The common life was not always an essential element of religious life. Throughout history, many forms of religious life were acceptable within the church. They range from the eremitic life-style, characterized by little or no group participation, to austere types of monasticism, to the common life as religious experience it today.

The essence of true community is not to be equated with the living together of religious. *Koinonia* was never meant to connote the concrete society of Christians themselves. Rather, according to *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, it is an abstract and spiritual term that describes the concord established and expressed in the body of Christian believers. Community is primarily a

covenant relationship, a spiritual bond and vision shared with others, not merely the physical togetherness of religious with similar vows, values, and ideals.

Just as living alone does not automatically isolate a person, neither does living together always bring people into a spirit of community marked by concord and shared vision. In *New Seeds of Contemplation*, Thomas Merton says bluntly that living with other religious does not guarantee that one will live in communion or even in communication with them.

According to the definition of *community* in *The Theological Dictionary*, vowed religious living under the same roof do not necessarily experience genuine community. No matter where religious live, or whether they live alone or together, they can still support one another in unity, love, and prayer. They can still search together for God's will in their lives. They can still share their lives with each other, as did early Christians who were miles apart. Community always transcends physical presence. Thus, while community is essential to religious life, it seems that the common life is not.

TRUSTING SELF AND OTHERS

Another big challenge that I envision for the future is a dual one: trusting one's own prayerful and honest discernment and respecting and affirming the same in others. In *Claiming Our Truth*, Elaine Prevallet suggests that congregational processes should not merely permit, but should insist, that members be responsive to their true inner selves. No longer should religious exclusively act out of a sense of what others think or expect. While dialogue and consultation are important, the individual must ultimately follow the Spirit dwelling within.

Prevallet admits that this shift of emphasis from outer to inner authority may prove difficult for both members and leaders. More than ever before, religious women will experience the need for education in various methods of personal and communal discernment.

It must be said that living alone may be interpreted by others as living an independent and free life-style. Only God is the authentic judge of motives. The prospect of living alone may generate expectations of liberty, autonomy, and individualism, but the person living alone usually finds that such expectations are not fulfilled. To anticipate coming home to oneself every day is generally not thrilling or comforting. One who lives alone has no handy scapegoats to blame for his or her ill humor, lack of discipline, or foolish mistakes.

One challenge of living alone can be facing and honestly confronting aspects of one's unattractive and egotistical self. Merton has written in *New Seeds* that if religious enter the desert to get away

from people they dislike or cannot get along with, they will never find inner peace and solitude. If they do choose to live alone because they dislike people, they will soon be confronted by their own inner tribe of devils. God has ways of transforming people's shadow sides into blessings.

EXTROVERTS AND INTROVERTS

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is an instrument that has been used by many congregations to enhance understanding and acceptance among their members. The indicator distinguishes between two personality functions: extroversion and introversion. Extroverts view the world from outside themselves, whereas introverts take an inner-world view. Extroverts experience people as a primary source of energy; introverts frequently lose energy when around people. Extroverts need more social contact, while introverts prefer more space and solitude. Many extroverts feel lonely when deprived of people for a length of time. Introverts often feel lonely in large groups and crowds; they usually make quick exits.

The six sisters I mentioned were all introverts. They had lived the common life for twenty years or more. They each felt they needed more space and solitude in their lives. These sisters were involved in intensely relational, time-consuming, and physically and emotionally draining ministries. In the evenings they hungered for time to be alone, to relax, and to pray. Their desire for solitude had nothing to do with liking or disliking the sisters with whom they lived. They simply experienced a deep need for quiet time and space.

For many sisters who live alone, coming together for congregational meetings and celebrations might be much anticipated and appreciated. Perhaps these sisters would be able to bring more of a contemplative and prophetic dimension to community assemblies. In *Poets, Prophets, and Pragmatists*, Evelyn Woodward comments that when religious are geographically separated, their times together are often more meaningful and grace-filled. She believes that physical separation challenges religious to find new ways of relating with each other.

A CROSSROADS AHEAD

As a new decade begins and a new century nears, life for women religious comes to a crossroads. I have little doubt that most congregations would affirm the definition of *community* contained in *The Theological Dictionary*. Community will be as vital to religious life in the future as it is today.

One aspect of religious life that I believe will change over the years is the requirement that religious live the common life. This will cause much discomfort to many congregations. More sisters are living alone today than ever before in

this century. Most of them are doing so because of their choice of ministry. A few have been allowed to live alone because they need solitude. I believe that more sisters will express this same need for quiet and space in the future.

I also believe that the leadership and members of many congregations will experience a greater need for education and practice in methods of individual and communal discernment. As a result of these prayerful processes, I envision the evolution of more trust among religious—a basic trust that is the fruit of true community lived out in love.

There will always be persons who do not understand or appreciate another's route to holiness. Women religious are no exception; some may consider sisters who feel called to live alone selfish and individualistic. So be it!

The greatest struggle of those who attempt to follow their true selves is believing that people who label them selfish may not be correct. Religious who are so labeled may be consoled by a prayer of Thomas Merton, as recorded in *Thoughts in Solitude*: "All I know is that my desire to please you does in fact please you!"

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Brain Damage Linked with Rage

Brain damage is increasingly being recognized as a major cause of outbursts of rage and the violence that often ensues. Dr. Louis J. West, chairman of the Psychiatry Department at the Medical School of the University of California at Los Angeles, reports that "the number of cases where brain damage explains an explosive rage is not so small as we used to think." In several studies, as many as 70 percent of persons manifesting rage reactions were found to have neurological damage. At the University of Pennsylvania, a study of 286 psychiatric patients prone to unprovoked outbursts of rage showed that 94 percent had some kind of brain damage. Head injuries, Alzheimer's disease, and encephalitis had been the major causes.

Many violent criminals have also been found to be victims of brain injuries. Each of the twenty-nine death-row inmates at one penitentiary had experienced a head trauma early in life. Falls from trees or regular physical beatings by a parent were noted in the medical records of many of these prisoners. New York psychiatrist Dorothy Otrow Lewis, who conducted the research on death-row inmates, has concluded that

"there is no question that much violent crime can be traced, in part, to brain injury, especially in criminals who were repeatedly violent." She adds, "The most lethal combination is a history of neurological damage and abuse in childhood. When you have a kid who has some organic vulnerability like a brain injury, and you add being raised in a violent household, then you create a very, very violent person."

Research has shown that injuries to the frontal areas of the cortex of the brain are the most likely to result in attacks of rage. These brain areas are generally able to control aggressive impulses that originate in lower brain centers. But when the controlling areas sustain damage, the inhibitions are removed, and rage is thus expressed freely. One of the most promising new treatments for rage reactions is propranolol, a beta blocker that is widely used by physicians to treat high blood pressure. This medication, like others used to control rage, achieves its effect by decreasing the activity of adrenaline, noradrenaline, and serotonin, the brain chemicals involved in the emotions of anger, hostility, and rage.

Integrating Self-Esteem and Self-Denial in Christian Life

Wilkie Au, S.J., Ph.D.

Christians who strive to live the message of the gospel are often perplexed by paradox. The New Testament instructs them to humble themselves if they want to be exalted, to die in order to live, to lose themselves in order to find new life. Thus, the gospel often seems to exhort Christians to embody contradictory and irreconcilable values. Self-love, for example, is a gospel mandate that stems from Jesus' twofold commandment to love, as well as from the holiness code of Leviticus: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:25-28; Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34). At the same time, self-denial is also a recurrent gospel admonition: "Anyone who loves his or her life will lose it and anyone who hates his or her life in this world will keep it for the eternal life" (John 12:25).

Since both self-love and self-denial are requirements of Christian life, they cannot be seen as mutually exclusive. Yet how can one harmoniously integrate these two gospel values in his or her life? The purpose of this article is to highlight the equal importance of these values to integral Christian development.

GRATEFUL ASSENT TO SELF

In discussing the love of God, neighbor, and self that is entailed in Jesus' twofold commandment, self-love must be looked at first. It demands pri-

mary consideration because all other loves limp without a footing in self-love. The psychological prerequisite for all other loves, healthy self-regard makes the leap from narcissism to altruism possible. Self-hatred blocks people from loving others, and self-rejection often leads to a rejection of God. According to theologian Johannes Metz in his book, *Poverty of Spirit*, a person's self-acceptance is the basis of the Christian creed because assent to God begins with one's sincere assent to oneself, just as sinful flight from God starts in one's flight from oneself. Thus, the absence of self-esteem renders people impotent to love and incapable of fulfilling the twofold commandment of Jesus. We have generally overlooked the ethical and religious scope of self-esteem or love of self. According to Metz, one's yes to self "may be regarded as the 'categorical imperative' of the Christian faith: You shall lovingly accept the humanity entrusted to you! . . . You shall embrace yourself!"

Far from achieving self-love with a kind of narcissistic ease, we often find self-acceptance a difficult struggle, and we are constantly tempted with self-rejection. Inner voices disturb our peace and tell us that we are not good-looking enough, not smart enough, not rich enough, not talented enough. Advertisements displaying societally acclaimed examples of successful and beautiful people either create or reinforce our inner doubts. On college campuses, the incidences of depression and suicide are growing indications that poor self-

worth is a serious problem. Given these conditions, it is not difficult to concur with Metz's insight into why self-love was commanded by God. "Knowing the temptation which humanity itself is," knowing how readily we try to flee the "harsh distress of the human situation," and knowing how difficult it is to bear with ourselves, we can then understand why "God had to prescribe 'self-love' as a virtue and one of the great commandments."

The struggle with accepting one's self is complicated by the fact that it cannot be done selectively. It is futile to conduct an inventory of ourselves, claiming some parts as good and discarding others as undesirable. Psychologically speaking, healthy self-acceptance cannot be based on denial and projection. Maturity will elude us as long as we try to disown unattractive parts of ourselves and project them onto others. As one retreat master used to put it, "Maturity comes when we stop blaming God for making us the way we are." Only by embracing the fact that we are people uniquely fashioned by the Lord can we progress spiritually. Paradoxically, this acceptance, instead of leading to self-complacency, can be the beginning of growthful change. Acceptance breaks down the walls of defensiveness and permits the pentecostal winds of conversion to blow freely throughout the self. Energies formerly wasted on battling the truth of who we are can be converted to peaceful reconstruction of the self under the guidance of God's spirit. Factored into the reality of Christian self-acceptance is the humble acknowledgment that at every point in our lives we are called to conversion. The Lord's creative power is continually at work in us, for we are radically unfinished yet filled with stunning grace. Our personhood is oriented to completions that are received rather than achieved. Capturing the spirit of this truth, a popular poster states, "Please be patient. The Lord is not finished with me yet!"

SELF-ACCEPTANCE A GIFT

A Zen master in San Francisco is said to have assigned this mantra to his enlightenment-seeking disciples: "What you are is enough. What you have is enough." Through repetition and internalization, the mantra was meant to calm their inner storm of dissatisfaction. The wisdom of the Zen master's guidance is clear. Because it is easier to say no instead of yes to ourselves, all asceticism must first be designed to serve this great yes. But for Christians, asceticism alone cannot lead to self-love. Only the Lord's grace can. Unlike Zen Buddhists, Christians must achieve love of self not by any repeating of spiritual mantras but by receiving it as a gift from God.

At the start of the *Spiritual Exercises*, a set of prayer experiences designed by St. Ignatius of Loyola in order to share his mystical graces with

others, the retreatant is asked to pray for the grace to know in a deeply felt way that "I am limited, yet loved; sinful, yet good."

Ultimately, self-acceptance must be based on an act of faith in the Lord who created us and deemed us to be good. In our self-denigrating way, we too often refuse to believe that "God does not make junk." We need to experience a conversion in regard to ourselves—a fundamental shift from being self-depreciative to being self-appreciative. Based on the unconditional acceptance of God, who delights in us, we are challenged to affirm our radical goodness. Such a conversion manifests itself psychologically as a growing realization that we are important, lovable, useful human beings, that people like us, are affectionate toward us, and enjoy our presence. Such a conversion helps us realize that we are individuals with our own needs as well as our own special gifts and talents—unique identities in the world.

Paul Tillich, in his book *The Courage to Be*, links this kind of self-acceptance with faith, which he defines as the courage to accept our acceptance despite feelings of unacceptability.

This self-affirming faith comes only when a person is struck by God's grace. Tillich described this identity conversion beautifully in a sermon entitled "You Are Accepted," which is found in his *The Shaking of the Foundations*.

Do you know what it means to be struck by grace? . . . We cannot transform our lives, unless we allow them to be transformed by the stroke of grace. It happens or it does not happen. And certainly it does not happen if we try to force it upon ourselves, just as it shall not happen so long as we think, in our self-complacency, that we have no need of it. Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. It strikes us when, year after year, the longed-for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage. Sometimes at that moment a shaft of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted. You are accepted," accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted. If that happens to us, we experience grace. . . .

Thus, fulfillment of the gospel commandment to love ourselves is made possible when grace convinces us of our acceptability through our experience of being accepted by One who is greater than ourselves. This identity conversion is a pure gift. We cannot compel ourselves to accept ourselves. We cannot force others to accept themselves. As Tillich puts it: "Sometimes it happens that we receive the power to say 'yes' to ourselves, that

Our unhealed wounds are like binding chains that prevent us from reaching out to others in ministry and community

peace enters into us and makes us whole, that self-hatred and self-contempt disappear, and that our self is reunited with itself. Then we can say that grace has come upon us."

In Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, the character Shug describes the feeling of wholeness that comes with the amazing grace of self-acceptance based on God's love:

One day when I was feeling like a motherless child, which I was, it come to me: that feeling of being part of everything, not separated at all. I knew that if I cut a tree, my arm would bleed. And I laughed and I cried and I run all round the house. I knew just what it was. In fact, when it happen, you can't miss it.

This conversion that brings about a fundamental shift in attitude can be quite dramatic, but generally it is not a once-and-for-all experience. Normally, it is a prolonged process, though as Bernard J. F. Lonergan notes in *Method in Theology*, its explicit acknowledgment may be concentrated in a few momentous judgments and decisions. Moments of deep consolation in prayer that assure us of God's unshakable love and our absolute lovable-ness, for example, are important religious experiences, but their impact often diminishes with the passage of time. Thus, in the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola advises people to record these precious moments of graced insight as a support for times when forgetfulness plunges them once again into the chasm of self-doubt. At these moments of desolation, he reminds them to wait in hope for the return of the Lord's affirming visitations.

When people were healed by Jesus, they often found themselves doubly blessed. The grateful leper, for example, not only was cleansed of his unsightly wounds but also was given back the uniquely human capacity to appreciate and give thanks (Luke 17:11-19). In healing people, Jesus empowered them to reach out to others and to proclaim the "good news." The Gerasene demoniac, screeching out his identity as "legion," not only was healed of his fragmentation and self-destructiveness but also was given a share in the ministry of Jesus. The cured man "went off and proceeded to spread [*kerussein*] throughout the Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him" (Mark 5:20). (The verb *kerussein* is used in Mark to imply official preaching by a disciple.)

As in the case of the demoniac, our unhealed wounds are like binding chains that prevent us from reaching out to others in ministry and community. Pain often imprisons us in caves of isolation and renders us impotent to love others as Jesus did. Thus, a spirituality that emphasizes the importance of self-esteem is misunderstood if it seems in any way to smack of narcissism. Ironically, narcissistic behavior often stems from a severe deficit, not an abundance, of self-love. Egotistical preoccupation with keeping the body beautiful or staying in the limelight often derives from a shaky sense of self. Sometimes poor self-worth masquerades itself in seemingly loving behavior, as in the case of a co-dependent spouse who cannot say no to his or her addictive partner. This kind of false altruism is deadly, for it abets the addiction, which should instead be confronted with "tough love" (a term used in Alcoholics Anonymous). To deal with an addict with tough love, however, requires a strong sense of self-regard; without this, the co-dependent can easily be drawn into a conspiracy of denial. Another example of poor self-esteem disguising itself as altruism is manifested in the compulsive helper (often the adult child of an alcoholic), who is plagued with an excessive sense of responsibility. By promoting self-love, Christian spirituality encourages authentic altruism, not narcissism.

Self-love establishes the condition that makes going beyond one's self (self-transcendence) possible. The grace that enables us to accept ourselves simultaneously stirs within us an urge to break down the walls that separate us from others. In Tillich's words, "We experience the grace of being able to accept the life of another, even if it be hostile and harmful to us, for, through grace, we know that it belongs to the same God to which we belong, and by which we have been accepted."

SELF-DENIAL A VALUE

The love of self prescribed by Jesus is fully

Mature Christian Holiness Requires Paradoxical Blend of Gospel Values

Encourages Altruism



"You must love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:28)
"Anyone hating their life in this world will keep it for the eternal life" (John 12:25)



Promotes Service of the Kingdom

understood only when juxtaposed with the gospel value of self-denial. Unfortunately, the notion of self-denial has suffered so many aberrations throughout the history of Christian spirituality that it frequently triggers a knee-jerk rejection among some Christians. Brutal scourgings, severe fasts, and other harsh ascetical practices that harm the body have been justified in the name of self-denial. Even such saints as Ignatius of Loyola and Francis of Assisi damaged their health through excessive bodily mortifications that they later regretted. Having been mistakenly used to rationalize such unchristian views as repression of the body, denigration of sexuality, and devaluation of the earth, self-denial understandably evokes negative feelings among many people. However, no spirituality can be biblically based and authentically Christian without giving self-denial its proper place. A contemporary Christian spirituality must therefore reaffirm the value of self-denial and divest it of distorted meanings.

Since self-denial as the condition for following Christ finds its source in the gospels (Mark 8:34–38; Matt. 10:38–39, 16:24–28; Luke 9:23–27, 24:26–27; John 12:25), it is best understood in its New Testament context, as William Karel Grossouw notes in *Spirituality of the New Testament*. Here we find that the purpose of Christian self-denial is entirely positive: it is "for my [Jesus'] sake and for the sake of the gospel" (Mark 8:36)—that is, for the promotion of the kingdom of God that has come in Christ. Literally, the Greek term for *deny* means to say no, to negate. The sweeping no to one's self that the gospels encourage finds its meaning in the yes that one says to Christ by following him and working for the kingdom. The synoptic context does not support any interpretation of self-denial that would direct it primarily against the earthly or sensual, or against any particular class of passions. Rather, self-denial is primarily directed against one's self, in a precise sense: not *I* as such, but only insofar as *I* stands in the way of witness for Christ and the

gospel—insofar as I resist surrendering myself to the concrete demands of the kingdom of God. Understood in this way, self-denial applies to selfishness in the here and now. According to Grossouw, it is not meant to refer “to some abstract condition which is always present within me and against which I must strive in season and out of season.” As he puts it, “Self-denial must not be associated with hatred of self or even a lust for destroying, subduing, or humiliating self, such as has frequently occurred in the history of religion.”

Thus, the object of self-denial is undefined and cannot be known outside of a particular situation. What is to be denied can only be determined in each circumstance by a discernment of what in me, in the here and now, is standing in the way of witnessing to Christ and the gospel. An inner obstacle can be anything that I stubbornly want to dispose of by myself, without regard for its impact on proclaiming the gospel. It may concern finance, diet, or relationships. It does not apply to any specific material good in and of itself, except insofar as it is concretely recognized to be an obstacle to giving oneself for Jesus' sake and for the sake of the gospel. From its scriptural context, then, self-denial is most accurately understood as being directed against any form of selfishness that would make a person unavailable for the service of Christ.

RELIGION PROMPTS SELF-TRANSCENDENCE

To safeguard the radical goodness of the human person, some women spiritual writers prefer to speak of *transcending* rather than *denying* the self. Acknowledging their debt to Karl Rahner, they attempt to evoke an image of the person as a being open to, and capable of communion with, ultimate Mystery. Regina Bechtle, S.C., in her article “Reclaiming the Truth of Women's Lives” (*The Way*, January 1988), writes that the self to be transcended is good, not evil. In the same vein, theologian Joseph Powers, S.J., argues in *Spirit and Sacrament: The Humanizing Experience* that the principal function of religion is to invite each believer to become open to the basic mystery of the self. Far from settling us in security, religion “should be the principal stimulus to a continual transcendence of any or all of the achievements which define a personal or corporate ego.” By reassuring us of the enabling presence of God in human life, religion encourages us to reach out to the mystery of being—indeed, to the mystery of being more than our present self.

The movement beyond one's self to others in self-transcending love requires a healthy sense of self. Once I was asked for advice by a friend struggling with a decision. Anguishing over the plight of Nicaraguans who feared an imminent invasion by U.S. Marines in 1983, she felt moved to join a group of Americans planning to thwart the invasion by laying their bodies down as a human blockade on the border between Honduras and Nicaragua. Aware of her history of low self-worth, I said to her, “My concern is that you don't seem to love your life enough to justify giving it up.”

Because we cannot give what we do not have, donating of ourselves presupposes self-possession. According to Bechtle, this issue is especially problematic for women, who have been socialized to place the needs of others before their own and thus to repress awareness of their own rightful needs or to feel guilty and selfish for having them. But the temptation to swallow the self is not limited to women. Men are also susceptible to this trap. The task of spiritual self-transcendence for Christians thus requires that women and men first grow into and claim their conscious and responsible selfhood.

Psychological and spiritual health does not consist in forfeiting a self but in keeping the process of self-formation flowing so that we continually enlarge the images by which we understand ourselves. An integrative spirituality today challenges all Christians not to cling to the well-being of the present but to strive always for the “more-being” contained in future possibilities. In the words of Jesus, “Anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it” (Mark 8:35–36).

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AFTER THE LAST CLASS

James Torrens, S.J.

I'm behind the rounded shoulders of Our Lord and the bold letters "Learn from me." How still. What a moon hangs there with its continents, between a palm tree and a thinning olive from old Mission days. Chairs have unfolded on the lawn by thousands, attentive for the brass notes of commencement. Under a long canopy the watchman whiles. I have this day read "La Dernière Classe," and taught it. ("Never desert the language you are born to.") Everything—planes flitting in like fireflies, the top of Swig Hall dorm, the adobe wall—says "Learn of me." I am a small part of the picture. Who's that? The young are coming behind me.

Twenty years ago, almost to this day, I was teaching the prose of Matthew Arnold and John Henry Newman. I had just begun my long stretch in the classroom at Santa Clara University. It was a boiling time on the college campus because American troops had just entered Cambodia and students at Kent State had been killed while expressing outrage. At Santa Clara there was a big protest rally, which I remember attending with some uneasiness. A delegation went from our school to join a mass protest in Washington, D.C. What reminds me of that just now is a slip of paper I find in my *Norton Anthology*: "The men who went to D.C. went as delegates of S.C.U. They had no right to do so."

I seem to have feared they would be taken as emissaries of our president and faculty!

Professors and students on our campus in the spring of 1970 organized a boycott of classes. I, however, failing to see a connection between fury against the U.S. government and the cessation of classes, persisted in discoursing on Arnold and Newman. About half the students came. (A day or so later the school year was terminated abruptly.) I now look back with a shock of recognition on the underlinings in our text for that fateful class. We read, from Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." Arnold, a late Victorian, from an age harping insistently upon narrow ideas, pleads for "the free play of the mind" upon two sides of a question, and for what he calls "disinterestedness" in approaching even the most politically sensitive issues. Wanting us "to see things as they are," he speaks even about "embracing the Indian virtue of detachment," despite all pressures of practicality. Imagine, this at the moment of a military invasion!

CULTURE OF THE MIND

Arnold's horizon was defined by the spires of his alma mater, Oxford. So was that of John Henry Newman. The excerpts from Newman that we pondered back in 1970 took liberal education itself as their subject. We may call an education liberal, Newman claims, when it produces not so much techniques and solutions as a "philosophical temper," a "general culture of the mind," an enlargement and comprehensiveness of outlook. Knowledge in a university setting, Newman declared, is not a matter of "direct and simple vision"; it proceeds, rather, "by piecemeal and accumulation, by a mental process, by going round an object, by the comparison, the combination, the mutual correction, the continual adaptation of many partial notions." In this pithy account of a gradual truth-seeking method, we have the seed of what later

flowered as *A Grammar of Assent*—Newman's attempt to trace the interaction between reason and faith in the case of an ordinary believer. Newman's mode of inductive reasoning appealed to me so mightily as a way through the welter of contemporary ideas that when a national emergency arose, I think I resented it and fought it off as an incursion.

Derek Bok, the president of Harvard, recently singled out Newman as spokesman for the university "as a place detached from society, uncontaminated by its worldly values." From our present viewpoint—amid national and ethnic uprisings, gay-power initiatives, the battle against the international AIDS plague, and the mobilization of women in politics, ethics, and ecclesiology—Newman's image of the intellectual may suggest a hapless figure: the pipe-smoking academic always ready to consider things from yet another angle ("Now, class, for the theory of so-and-so") but never ready to settle on a position of his own. And truly, if there is a vice proper to the campus (besides that of jockeying for promotion), is it not the vice of playing with ideas instead of staking one's life on them? But John Henry Newman was one who had staked his life; he was no patron of the ivory tower.

John Henry Newman, in his June 1852 lectures on *The Scope and Nature of University Education*, was not just daydreaming. He was proposing a blueprint for an actual Catholic university, which the Irish bishops had just asked him to establish in Dublin. The bishops felt themselves pushed into the project; they had little enthusiasm for it. Meriol Trevor, Newman's biographer, says:

It is clear that even Cullen [archbishop of Dublin], the only Irish bishop who had supported the idea of a Catholic university (because Roman policy was against "mixed" education [i.e., with Protestants]) really expected nothing more than a college, a kind of lay seminary, controlled by priests. . . . Newman shocked him by the freedom he allowed the students and the laymen [including nationalistic Young Irelanders] he appointed to the staff.

And then Newman's educational aims seemed startlingly modern—scientific faculties and a school of medicine (which flourished more than any). . . . What was more, Newman gave lectures to the faculties assuring them a proper intellectual freedom, just as he allowed the students a proper moral freedom. . . . He was not a commander or director; he treated others as equals, as being capable of a responsibility they did not always show. In an era strong in father figures, Newman preferred brotherhood.

THEOLOGY PROVIDES INTEGRATION

In a strong hierarchical and dogmatic era of the church, Newman, the probing convert, aroused much suspicion. Partisan spirits did not take kindly to his perspective. So he found himself almost alone in a task that preoccupied him: to engage and respond to the secular spirit. Here are the goals

Newman aimed at in his *University* lectures: to help Catholics read with some sympathy and insight the mostly Protestant literature in English; to assure students of science that evolutionary findings would not destroy the faith; and to encourage honest biblical study. He insisted that theology must be the integrating subject, central to the life of the mind. If Derek Bok and others find that Newman leaned toward contemplative composure, it was for the purpose of theology—that is, to study the implications of revealed truth. Theology does not stand alone, Newman said, but in relationship to many partial views of human and material reality. To the "victims of an intense self-contemplation," it reveals the transcendent, "the whole truth" (discourses 4 and 8).

Today, after twenty years of university teaching, rereading Newman on the centenary of his death, I am awed by his penetration and his prescience. He seemed to be responding, in the mid-nineteenth century, to our university climate today, as described by Robert Kiely in the "Religion and Education" issue of *Daedalus* (Spring 1988):

One impression that is commonly given to American undergraduates when they first arrive on a university campus is that truly educated and smart people cannot continue to be believers. Of course, there are chaplaincies and comparative religion courses and, in some universities, excellent divinity schools, but the primary message is that religion is private, peripheral, and intellectually suspect. For thousands of students, this message must seem like part of an Alice-in-Wonderland reversal, since in the world in which they have grown up religion is public and central.

Since Newman's time, the challenges of secularity have not mutated but have intensified. Post-Kantian skepticism about the adequacy of language to establish any contact with the real predominates. Metaphysics has been relegated to the status of science fiction. In the not-so-old days, a Jesuit college graduate went forth secure (naively, of course) in the belief that "the perennial philosophy" was a key to unlock any door. How much more frequent now, and almost unavoidable, is relativistic thinking—or hard-line thinking, by reaction.

The temper of mind that Newman called for as normal in the university turns out now to be pretty rare. At Santa Clara recently we had a pro-choice versus pro-life debate—definitely a first. What would Newman think of such an event? Impossible to say, of course. But he did lay down the principle, in his *University* lectures, that "Truth is bold and unsuspicious," and he asked, in consequence, Why keep opponents from speaking "if you think that your friends have reason on their side as fully as your opponents" (discourse 4)? But he would no doubt be aghast at the media tactics of our time, at the amplified pitch and volume and consequent

distortions more proper to a rally than to a serious conversation.

NEWMAN INFLUENTIAL

I am at this juncture of my life leaving the classroom, switching away from the strenuous task of correcting and recorrecting papers but also from the continual stimulus that a university provides. (Religious journalism may in fact provide me more of the same.) Looking back on these twenty years in the classroom, I can see how the ideas of Newman were doing their quiet work on me. As a teacher of literature—of the books and writers, mostly, that I had wanted the opportunity to study—I have gone with students in and out of worlds that clash with my own deepest values, that are ecstatic, or depressed, or exotic, or skeptical, or even sinister, in ways foreign to my own sensibility.

Often in class I was able to return to Dante and T. S. Eliot, to Langston Hughes and Marianne Moore, and to other writers I found sympathetic. But much more important than the pay dirt of favorite authors was the opportunity to range over the field with my students, weighing values along with them and laboring to clarify our human understanding and our commitments. Take as an example of an unforgettable but problematic text the villanelle of Dylan Thomas, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night." Thomas, modulating high- and low-frequency vowels with perfect command, subtly managing the overtones of words, sings the reader and the hearer into a certain attitude—that is, into a stance of bitter resistance before death. Pity that this approach to dying is one that I cannot accept because it seems at odds with the Christian. I only wish that I had capitalized better on this discrepancy so as to debate it more fully with my students.

It dawns on me now, even as I write, that the very language of Newman's lectures, such as "Christianity and Letters," and of his poignant *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, and of his orations upon Catholicism being legitimized in England (*The Present Position of Catholics in England*) became pervasive in my own language. As a writer and teacher of composition, after I had imbibed Newman I had to unlearn his Ciceronian, or periodic, way of speaking, with its careful balance of related elements. After all, the clipped sentence full of active verbs is the idiom of our times. My essay "Wisewriting" in the last issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT expresses allegiance to that more spicy mode. It is what readers today enjoy and expect. Still, I think I never did unlearn Newman. Maybe this influence of his on my own voice explains the trouble I had accomplishing in

class what students most of all expect, "making one thing perfectly clear."

The voice of Newman actually haunted the nineteenth century, according to Professor David De Laura (lecture at Santa Clara University, May 4, 1989). Matthew Arnold called it "the most entrancing of voices, subtle, sweet, mournful." Others judged it "clear, intense, piercing," or found "a severe, tender voice, a simple but studied delivery." Newman knew what he was about, "the power of the transcendent located in the voice," as De Laura puts it. To Newman, who entitled one of his talks "Personal Influence the Means of Promoting the Truth," the truth conveyor is not a disembodied medium but a person. The witness is a subject. In the years after Vatican Council II this notion has become familiar. John Henry Newman, with his Oxford ethos, fitting uneasily into his Catholic milieu, turns up as a sympathetic spirit in our milieu—certainly in mine.

REMINDER TO REMEMBER

My poem "After the Last Class" came as I was preparing a brief tribute to Newman as part of the concluding prayer at our graduation ceremony. I wandered out of Nobili Hall, Santa Clara University, about 9:00 P.M. after a long day, and there in the Mission Gardens was the scene. Much earlier that day my mind had wandered elsewhere, to when I was a seminary student first learning French. We were taught vocabulary and structure through the short stories of Alphonse Daudet, especially "La Dernière Classe," set in the 1870s. So I had gone and looked up Daudet again.

In "La Dernière Classe" a man who has taught French grammar to Alsatian children for forty years learns from the invading Prussians that there is to be "no more French." He gives his pupils a sad and simple farewell: "Do not forget the language that you were born into." John Henry Newman is a language I was born into. On this centenary year of his death at the Birmingham Oratory on August 11, 1890, I want to remember.



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Support for New Priests

Reverend James M. McNamara

The first months and years of priesthood involve a great deal of adjustment and change for the newly ordained priest. After focusing several years on the eventual goal of ordination, and after experiencing a focus on himself in the celebrations surrounding ordination, the new priest settles into the daily life of a parish. He encounters the pressures and possibilities of the active ministry, he experiences the varied and sometimes conflicting expectations of people in the rather polarized church of today, and he adjusts to the small-group life of a rectory. Most rectories are the nerve centers of their parishes, and the newly ordained priest tries to cope with a certain loss of privacy and lack of control over his schedule and plans. In addition, he is expected to enter into real relationships with people in a more sexually charged environment than ever before, yet also to live a celibate commitment. Surely, it is not easy to be the person beginning in priesthood in the church today. He is subject to more varied expectations and judgments than were priests of twenty years ago. Rather than being readily accepted, he is challenged to prove himself. Some still want to put him on a pedestal, but others wonder why he has chosen this path. And the public image of priesthood is being tarnished by published stories of sexual abuse, whether accurate or not.

AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

This all leads to the critical importance of support and affirmation for newly ordained priests today. I find that they come to priesthood with

great generosity and love for the church. In this article I would like to describe the Ministerial Internship program in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, which offers ongoing formation and support to newly ordained priests. This program has been developed over the past eight years to meet several needs—namely, the transitional needs of men entering full-time active ministry for the first time, and the needs arising from making adjustments in the early years of ministry. Seminarians in the dioceses of Brooklyn and Rockville Centre spend a pastoral year in a parish after second theology. This valuable experience helps the seminarian discern his vocation by living the life to which he aspires, and gives him solid experience. However, there are still many challenges in being a priest that cannot be experienced beforehand. Therefore, our two-year Internship program is timely.

Mentors Assist Growth. There are several dimensions to the program. The first dimension involves a one-to-one mentoring relationship. To begin with, we accept the term *growth supervision* (rather than *evaluative supervision*) to describe our purpose. The focus is on the new priest's personal development and the enhancement of his ministry. It aims to help him set personal priorities, evaluate his pastoral needs and skills, and develop effectively within his present pastoral situation. The mentor is there to help the newly ordained priest grow, not to evaluate him for his superiors. The mentor's task is well described in *Christian Life Patterns*, by James and Evelyn Whitehead:

A mentor invites growth in the capacity for intimacy. The relationship can be seen as that of older colleague and younger apprentice; in the initial expressions of his or her own creativity, the younger person enjoys the supervision of an experienced friend and associate. This supervision is, however, not only a business relationship, it is an *overseeing* by someone interested both in the person's work and the person. The mentor is a transitional figure in the life of the young adult. Without the control or authority of a parent, the mentor invites a younger person to fuller self-expression both in work and personal relationships.

This is different from a spiritual direction relationship, which is focused on prayer and the spiritual growth of a person. A young priest who asks an older priest to be his spiritual director is likely to be told, "I don't know much about that." But if a young priest asks an older one to meet with him to discuss ministry and parish life, the older priest is likely to be more comfortable and thus more willing to respond affirmatively. Such a relationship is mutually beneficial.

The mentor and the newly ordained priest meet approximately every six weeks over a two-year period. The mentor is a priest from outside the seminary structure, ordained several years and serving a pastoral assignment in a place other than that in which the newly ordained is serving. Both meet with the parish staff approximately every six weeks. This part of the program is hard to implement. A pastor and his staff commit themselves to the continuing formation of a newly ordained priest when they agree to his assignment to their parish and make a commitment to attending these regular meetings. The pastor decides who constitutes the parish staff; it may be the priests of the rectory or others who serve in the parish. In a parish where staff meetings are already a regular occurrence, the staff meetings with the newly ordained and his mentor work well. They provide an opportunity for feedback and input to the newly ordained, though such communication is not meant to be evaluative. They also provide an opportunity for the newly ordained to raise topics for discussion—for example, pastoral approaches or projects of interest to him. The newly ordained and his mentor set the agenda.

The staff meeting can turn out to be informative and insightful. Following the meeting, the newly ordained and his mentor can discuss what was said. The mentor gets to see the newly ordained in the context of the parish staff and can help him reflect on his relationships with those with whom he lives and works. In my parish, the mentors meet together, with me (director of Ministry to Priests), twice a year to discuss how their work is going and how we might better serve the newly ordained priests. This meeting is not a discussion of the individual priests.

Training that might have seemed gimmicky or irrelevant in the seminary becomes quite helpful in the front lines of ministry

Overnights Develop Skills. The second dimension of the program consists of four overnights each year. The newly ordained from the dioceses of Brooklyn and Rockville Centre meet with the mentors at a retreat house. We begin with dinner out and then spend a relaxing evening together. The participants usually arrive tired, so this evening gives them a chance to enjoy one another's company, trade "war stories," and get a good night's sleep in preparation for the next day's events.

Over the years we have developed an agenda that includes training in skills that have great value to the newly ordained. These include listening, problem solving, assertion, and confrontation in the first year, followed by conflict management, group dynamics, and stress and time management in the second year. What might have been experienced as gimmicky or irrelevant in the seminary becomes quite helpful in the front lines of ministry. We try to be flexible about this agenda, as we desire to hear from the priests themselves and meet their expressed needs. A call for more spirituality has come from the latest group. Each group comes with its own history, which has to be respected, and each group needs to feel that its collective needs and desires are being heard by us.

The final overnight of the year is a time of recollection. This year we intend to invite back those involved in the Internship program over the last five years to take part in this day of prayer.

The program is sponsored by the Office of Ministry to Priests in both dioceses. As director of Ministry to Priests in Rockville Centre, I find that my presence at these gatherings, as well as an occa-

sional lunch with individuals, is time well spent in support of these fine priests.

MEETING NEW CHALLENGES

As we look to the future of the church, it is clear that these men will face many new challenges. They will be challenged to live their priesthood at a time when there will be less priests to share the demands of ministry. They may live alone or serve several parish communities individually. They will be asked to share ministry with lay men and women, who are increasingly becoming more educated theologically and more dedicated to the preservation of parish communities. They will be at the center of a transition to a church that is yet to evolve in our society—a church that will probably look very different from the one we have known. Facing an unknown future is both frightening and exciting. For some the fear may lead to discouragement; for others the excitement may result in burnout. Jesus and his Spirit will continue to be with the church as it seeks to be a faithful witness

of the gospel into the next century. That is no small consolation and inspiration to the young men who are presently beginning their service as priests. But it is not an excuse to abdicate our responsibility as the leaders of the church today to provide these men with all the support and affirmation they need and deserve to live healthy, happy lives in the priesthood. These men will be an important means by which the new church takes shape to serve the people of God in the twenty-first century.



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Self-Treatment of Insomnia Potentially Harmful

The problem of not getting enough sleep to awake refreshed affects 20 to 40 percent of American adults during any single year, and about 17 percent rate their insomnia problem a serious one. California psychiatrist J. Christian Gillin, in the *Harvard Medical School Health Letter*, describes the causes of sleep difficulties as falling into three categories: predisposing, precipitating, and perpetuating.

Predisposing factors are personal characteristics that make the individual vulnerable. Among those predisposed to insomnia are tense or driven people whose minds are filled with plans or worries. Neurological conditions and severe depression may also affect the quantity and quality of a person's sleep.

Precipitating factors are life events that bring on a period of disturbed sleep. Dr. Gillin observes, "Stresses that precipitate insomnia may include an increase in responsibilities, the loss of a loved one, hospitalization, or acute pain, to name a few." Jet lag or an abrupt change in one's work schedule can also provoke insomnia.

Perpetuating factors are behaviors that maintain sleeplessness as a problem once it has already begun.

Use of drugs or irregular habits of retiring and rising are common examples.

Dr. Gillin stresses the fact that sleeping pills treat only a symptom of insomnia, not its cause. He advises that "if insomnia has persisted for a matter of weeks, or if the precipitating factor is not very obvious, it is appropriate for a physician to take a cautious approach and evaluate the reasons for disruption of sleep." He cautions particularly against the use of alcohol as a self-prescribed sleep aid. It is true that alcohol can be relaxing and can produce a feeling of sleepiness not long after it is consumed in the evening, but tolerance and withdrawal occur shortly afterward. Before morning comes, sleep is likely to be disrupted. Moreover, abuse, dependence, and addiction are likely to result from relying on the regular use of alcohol to bring on sleep. Habitual reliance on over-the-counter sleeping pills containing antihistamines is also potentially harmful. As well as being inconsistently effective and often causing residual difficulty with memory and coordination, such preparations can provoke or worsen an episode of urinary retention, glaucoma, or asthma.

Praying with Desire

James M. Keegan, S.J.

One of the first things a child learns about prayer is that it has something to do with asking God for what we want. One of the second things a child learns is that often we do not get what we ask for, even when we ask it of God. Holding on to one's own desires while trying to look God in the eye can propel children of whatever age into the difficult business of adulthood, or it can instigate a crisis so deep that they settle into childhood for a longer stay, dismissing either their own desires or this God who seems unresponsive.

We discover as we move through our lives that we are needy creatures, and the story of getting older is inevitably the story of growing needier. Often we find ourselves praying to be delivered from our needs, or at least helped with them. Sometimes these prayers are answered, but often they are not. The loved one dies, and our prayers for her recovery end in midsentence; a significant relationship deteriorates despite our prayers and best efforts.

Faced with crises like these, people sometimes respond with a relinquishment of their own will and judgment in the form of a faith statement: "God knows what he is doing; it's not up to me to understand," or "This is God's will, and I just have to accept it." Such responses may be deep statements of trust in God, whose ways are indeed inscrutable. But as I often hear them in spiritual direction with people who are praying, I want to suggest that they can sometimes be unreflected

ways of abdicating one's own desires in an adult relationship with God.

RESPECT YOUR DESIRES

One of the reasons we do not hear God responding to our prayer is that we tend not to treat our desires and needs with the respect they deserve. Often we do not pray faithfully with our desires.

Let's look at an instance of a fictional person learning to pray faithfully with his desires. Joe D., a bank vice-president in his early fifties, has been coming to Lisa for spiritual direction for a few months. He feels that he needs to deepen his prayer life if he is going to be serious about the lay ministry program he has undertaken in his parish. When he prays, he reviews the daily liturgical readings, reflects on them and his life, and then prays for "myself, my wife and kids, and the people God has put into the coming day."

Despite Joe's desire for "more" in his prayer, Lisa did not feel she was of much help until the day Joe told her that he was very disturbed that Gene, his older brother, was experiencing advanced symptoms of Parkinson's disease despite fine medical help and Joe's insistent prayer for him. After hearing Joe speak of his feelings for Gene and their close relationship, Lisa asked what he said when he prayed for Gene. Joe replied that he asked God to heal Gene, to stop the disease, and to help the rest of the family. It was obvious that Joe had very

Looking at God primarily as a source of help can obscure something more significant: God is someone who wants to be known by us

strong feelings about what was happening in his family, yet those feelings did not seem to be part of his prayer. At one point in their conversation Lisa said, "God doesn't seem to be giving Gene what you want for him."

"Well, I never thought of it that way," Joe replied. "I guess it's up to him to give life or take it away. He is God, after all."

"And you?" Lisa asked.

"What do you mean? What about me? What power do I have to make God do what I want? I mean, I ask him, but I can't make it happen myself."

"You probably can't, Joe," Lisa replied. "But there seems to be a lot of power in what you feel for Gene, and I think there's a lot of power in the way you feel about God, too." Joe sat silently, looking at the floor. Lisa decided she would go on. "As I listen to you talk about this, though, I get the impression that you take Gene to God and ask for what you want; then you drop it there at God's feet and move on. Is that how it looks to you?"

Joe looked up, a little flushed. "Yeah, probably. Kind of like submitting a requisition slip!"

As Joe began to reflect on the ways he was treating God, Gene, and himself, alternatives to the ask-drop-run method of prayer began to appeal to him. He discovered that there was a great deal in his heart that he had not noticed or shared with God. At Lisa's suggestion, he put aside his need to pray for others and imagined himself bringing Gene to Jesus by letting him down through the roof, as the paralytic's friends do in the gospel of Mark. Joe was surprised at the tears that came when he thought of Gene this way, and also at the realization that this was the first time he had cried for his brother.

"It didn't feel like praying, but it felt good afterwards," Joe said. He had begun to get in touch with his desires about his brother's illness and to reveal them to God. Joe was becoming more himself before God.

GOD ASKS FOR THE HEART

Another event in Joe's story will bring us closer to understanding how praying faithfully with one's desires can be a key factor in a developing relationship with God. Some weeks after the incident in which he had wept for Gene, Joe found his prayer becoming more difficult again. With Lisa's help he discovered and admitted to himself that he was irritated with God for not taking better care of Gene. When his brother's condition worsened and he had to be hospitalized, Joe's irritation exploded. Aware of nothing but his anger, he screamed at God, "I want him well and you want him sick!" as he pounded a chair cushion with his fists. When the anger subsided, he reported, "I heard something inside me say, 'What kind of God do you think I am?'"

Joe was surprised. It was the first time he had ever "heard" God this way. He noticed that the voice was not harsh but quiet, even plaintive. It seemed to want a response from Joe. Although he did not know how to answer, Joe felt "almost thrilled" that God seemed to want to hear from him.

When he began to express his desire for Gene's recovery more seriously, Joe took a significant step on the road to an adult relationship with God. He began to take himself more seriously. He did not know what he would find in himself, or whether he would have the resources to cope with what he found, but he was willing to take the chance.

Looking at what he wanted and allowing it to lead him deeper into his own heart, Joe found tears and grief and relief. Although it didn't "feel like praying," Joe came to realize that he was actually sharing his desires with God by letting God see what was in his heart. Something relational took root when Joe stopped to look at what he was asking God; it broke through the ground when he shouted in anger at God, and a first bud appeared when he noticed that he was being asked for a response. Joe began to notice that God is someone who is interested in his heart.

Joe also began to take God more seriously. When Joe first sought spiritual direction, a good part of his sense of God was functional. God was for Joe, as for many, one who can do many things and who can make things better: a physician, a repairman, a psychotherapist. It is certainly true that God desires healing and growth for human beings, but looking at God primarily as a source of help can obscure something more significant: God is someone who wants to be known by us.

Joe has noticed, as many praying people do, that God is asking for a relationship. There is an Other

Party with desires here—someone who may have more to say to a praying person's petitions than simply "yes" or "no."

EXAMPLES FROM SCRIPTURES

The scriptures are filled with people who meet God when they stay faithful to their desires. In Genesis 18, Abraham bargains unrelentingly with God to spare the city of Sodom for the sake of the few just people there. When God responds that he will not destroy the city for the sake of fifty righteous ones, Abraham presses on, wearing God down with his haggling to forty-five, thirty, twenty, and finally to the point at which God says, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." Abraham's way of dickering with God may not be our way of speaking our desires to God, but Abraham certainly stays faithful to what he wants. In the process he meets a God who listens to him and reconsiders, and who tempers compassion with justice. Abraham also reveals himself to the Lord as a man of compassion. And God meets Abraham, too.

Jonah is a reluctant prophet who resents his successful mission to the Ninevites. When they hear God speaking through him and repent, God does not punish them as Jonah wishes he would. So the old curmudgeon tells God how angry he is. In fact, he is so upset that he wants to die.

When God makes a plant grow up overnight to give Jonah shade, Jonah is delighted. But his anger comes back full force when a worm gets into the plant and it withers. "He asked that he might die, and said, 'It is better for me to die than to live.' But God said to Jonah: 'Do you do well to be angry about the plant?' And he said, 'I do well to be angry, angry enough to die'" (Jon. 4:9).

We can smile at Jonah and his petulance, but we might miss the marvel of this prophet's relationship with God. Here is a man who can tell God the most unseemly things; who seems to have no problem revealing himself to God as small-minded and angry, who wants to die because his enemies are forgiven. How many of us have felt the very same resentment but have kept it to ourselves because it seems unworthy of us, or unworthy of God's presence? Jonah has no such reservations. He lets it all loose. As he does so he meets God, whose love encompasses every creature in the world, even the cattle (Jon. 4:10–11). Praying as he does, Jonah comes heart-to-heart with a God as enormous and tender as Jonah is small and brittle.

In the New Testament, James and John approach Jesus with the rash bravado of rookies discovering themselves in the major leagues (Mark 10:35–45). "We want you to do whatever we ask of you" sounds like an offer one could only refuse, but Jesus responds by asking what they want. Their request, like many of our own, is a thoughtless mixture of love, grandiosity, and fervor: "Grant us to sit, one

at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." They do not know what they are asking, but they ask. And when Jesus takes them at their word, they learn who he is and who they are in his company. Their impetuous desire, which makes their friends bristle, becomes the vehicle for Jesus' central revelation of himself in the Gospel of Mark: "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." These two apostles may look a bit ridiculous to us in this scene, but they had the courage to speak their heart to Jesus, and the courage to join a Jesus whose heart saw things quite differently. Had they not asked and entered into dialogue with him, they would not have met him as they did, and they might not have learned how to follow.

GOD INVITES RELATIONSHIP

These people and others, like the biblical Martha with her complaints and Thomas with his doubts, make themselves available to the Lord by voicing what they want. In doing that, they meet Jesus and God in a way they had not expected. They encounter a God who is eager to treat them as adults and to take their desires seriously, but who is also quite ready to make known his own heart and, thus, to enter into a mature relationship with them.

Although we share with the rest of humankind a life-or-death need to reveal ourselves to another and to receive that other into our world, many of us would rather not look below the surface of our desires. Perhaps with good reason, we shy away from these depths. We suspect that if we follow our desires into our hearts, we will meet ourselves more bluntly than we care to. Furthermore, we have heard rumors that it is in those very depths that one meets the Other whose desire for compassion, understanding, and justice may make our desires seem paltry and self-centered but who wishes to be our companion nonetheless. We may, however, take the risk that Joe took. We can put aside the child's agenda of answers and fixes and let our neediness take us into the adult world of negotiation and mutual understanding, where God wants to know who we really are and what we really want, and where God wants us to know him.



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Collaborating with the Laity

George B. Wilson, S.J.

If you're a betting person, here's a sure thing. Tell your friends that if they name any religious community at random, you will recite one of their recent chapter decrees without even looking at the chapter acts. Then, whatever community they name, just say: "We, the Religious of Holy ———, commit ourselves to increased collaboration with the laity."

Collaboration with the laity is in—that is clear.

When we ask why religious are setting this direction for themselves, however, the picture becomes a little cloudier.

In some cases it appears that the dominant motivation is sheer panic about survival. The size of the religious work force is shrinking, so we had better grab at the most obvious straw.

In many other cases one gets a slight sense of unease or even guilt. For twenty years the church has been telling us about the call of the laity to be as holy as religious ostensibly are, and other faiths seem to be trying the same thing. We don't want to look bad by comparison, do we?

And there are doubtless instances in which the community—or at least individuals within it—has experienced a genuine conversion, a transformation of the very paradigm that gives shape to its sense of mission. Such individuals and communities are embracing an energizing vision and are willing to allow that vision to challenge all that has identified them heretofore.

In the final analysis, however, motives may not be all that important. The significant thing is that in one way or another, the Lord is goading us into a new way of being a church.

So let's leave motivation aside. It remains true that the simple tag *collaboration with the laity* can embrace several very different things. Even the most primitive of them will set in motion some new human dynamics and call for a constant renegotiation of our expectations of both ourselves and each other. Although these days we can scarcely glimpse the final contours of what we are setting in motion, religious can ill afford to be totally naive about the commitments into which they are entering. At the very least, human lives are on the line—and that means the shape of the Kingdom of God is implicated.

LEVELS OF COLLABORATION

External and Internal Employment. In its minimum application, collaboration with the laity will mean, for some religious communities, employing laypersons in the works of the religious community. Most active communities that sponsor institutions such as schools or health care facilities have done this for a long time. These communities may not be aware that this is only a recently adopted or as yet untried venture in other communities. This could be true, for example, for communities in-

volved in staffing retreat or spirituality centers, running a religious bookstore, or providing Eucharistic breads. More common is the community that conducts a variety of apostolic works, in some of which laity are employed, in others only religious.

A significant new level of collaboration is created when religious invite laypersons to be employed in providing services to the members of the religious community. This can involve at least two changes that are significantly more penetrating.

One occurs when the laypersons' roles involve movement into the private life and quarters of the community, as is the case when they are employed in such areas as the community kitchen or dining room—or, most significantly, when they serve as nursing personnel within the living quarters of the community. Such changes can spark issues that are rarely touched on in chapter documents. Privacy, for example: Do we eat with "them"? Are they around when we are at our "unbuttoned ease"? How will we look? What will they see and hear? Is the house going to become like Grand Central Station? The more ideological issue might be the concern that the community will lose its religious distinctiveness.

Internal service by laypersons may raise another, perhaps more stressful, issue: religious' accountability to laypersons. Say a community hires a layperson to run the accounting office or to be the treasurer of the community. "Do you mean that person can tell me when I have to get my budget in? I didn't join religious life for that," a community member might think.

It would be unfair merely to caricature such attitudes. People have been socialized into them by long years in communities that consciously or unconsciously fostered them, and human caring calls for sensitivity to the pain that their uprooting can occasion.

The point is that even these minimal forms of collaboration—employment of one sort or another—can give rise to consequences that need to be foreseen and confronted in the decision-making process. Those responsible for community leadership will need good interpersonal skills to deal with the resistance that will emerge in the carrying out of policy decisions.

RESPONSIBILITY TO LAY PERSONNEL

The decision to hire laypersons, whether for the community's works or its internal services, has consequences not only for the community but also for the persons employed. Even at a minimal level of interaction, the community needs to ask itself about the responsibility it is assuming in terms of justice and equity for lay personnel. I should note that some of the things said thus far also apply to laity being hired by parish or diocesan churches; for example, pastors or bishops take on responsi-

bility and accountability when they hire laypersons to direct programs or offices.

It is sad to have to report that for many religious, although the meaning of collaboration with the laity may be couched in lofty spiritual rhetoric—even platitudes about peace and justice—it comes closer to serfdom in practice. In many situations the relationship of responsibility flows in only one direction: these are the community's expectations of you, the employee; the community assumes none toward you.

It would be tempting at this point to go into a long treatise on the requirements of just relationships. Fortunately, the groundbreaking work of setting forth such principles in the American cultural context has been started for us by the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators and in particular by Barbara Garland, S.C. For the purposes of this article, it may be sufficient to emphasize that we as a church can simply no longer tolerate the behavior of pastors or superiors who dismiss church employees in arbitrary and unaccountable fashion. When higher superiors accept such action, they make a mockery of our image as a gospel-proclaiming church.

Even assuming that conditions of justice and equity are maintained, however, it is clear that the concept of collaboration is hanging by the thinnest of threads if the mind-set of religious is that laypersons are only employees of the religious enterprise. If the meaning of the word *collaboration*, in practice, is exhausted by its root verb, the laity merely *labor* for religious. They're no longer serfs, but they've only come as far as the fields of the plantation.

Colleagueship. Collaboration reaches a new and more humanizing level when it becomes colleagueship. Co-laborers all too frequently work for or under; colleagues work alongside or with.

The transition to colleague status takes place in the internal, psychic world of the two parties. It involves a transformation of the attitudes of both parties. It is relational in nature and, as with any relation, it can be impeded by obstacles arising out of long-embedded social patterns on either side. Just as there are religious who are conditioned to treat laypersons as second-class citizens, so are there laity conditioned to image themselves in exactly that way. "It's your church/school/hospital, Sister" can be a smooth way of avoiding responsibility. It's always disappointing, even to people who have ingested it for generations.

Colleagues are peers. They may not all have the same function or position in the enterprise, but beyond the respect that people deserve just for their personhood, they give each other equal respect for the contribution each makes to the corporate effort. The challenge of creating peer relationships can entail a lifelong conversion. It involves

Usually, when people invest their life energies in a corporate project, they want some degree of policy empowerment

dealing with people's need to control or be controlled, with their sense of competence or lack thereof, and with openness to mutual critique. If it is achieved by some of the religious, it will probably shake up relationships between members in the same community. It would behoove the religious community calling for collaboration to think carefully about what its goal is and what reaching it will cost in terms of attitudinal shifts.

Empowerment. We move now to an even more significant level of collaboration involving a deeper facet of corporate identity. Howard Gray, S.J., has helped immensely to advance the dialogue on this subject by urging religious to consider that eventually the real issue will turn out to be not collaboration in its minimal sense, or even the achievement of collegiality, but what he calls codetermination.

As people begin to see themselves as peers, it is a natural next step for them to raise the issue of psychological ownership of the project. They want some say—some sense that they are shaping what it is they will be asked to commit themselves to. Gray's term frames the question nicely: Who determines what we are going to do or be? Or, put another way: Whose university (or retreat center, or agency) is this? Does the community's legal title to the facility, or even to its name, give it the power to shape its program or its mission?

The issue is one of empowerment. To raise the question is not a form of arrogance on the part of lay colleagues; it is the reasonable outgrowth of expectations raised by inviting people into peer

relationships. To treat it as an act of unwarranted *chutzpah* is to unmask one's religious colonialism.

Within the realm of empowerment, there are two levels to be noted. The initial one, operational empowerment, concerns the power to determine how to carry out one's role in the enterprise—that is, how to do one's job. To encourage people to be self-starters within the role delegated to them is more than just good management; it involves fundamental respect for people's competence and adulthood.

Usually, when people demonstrate their commitment to the corporate project through the investment of their life energies, they also eventually want to make an impact on—even to codetermine—the larger goals, direction, vision, or mission of the enterprise. They will want some degree of policy empowerment.

To illustrate: a religious community is holding an assembly to celebrate its educational system. When the possibility of the community's withdrawal from some of the schools is raised, one of the religious asserts that the general administration should appoint a visitor to do a survey to determine which institutions to withdraw from. At which point one of the lay colleagues says in amazement, "I can't believe that the community would think it perfectly appropriate to make such a decision without even bringing us into the conversation."

Some congregations (for example, the Congregation of Saint Joseph, in Concordia, Kansas) make it a practice, at time of chapter, to invite a broad spectrum of people related in any way to the mission of the community—bishops, priests, other religious, lay colleagues—to gather and reflect with the members on how the community is "coming across" and how it might serve more effectively. The chapter heeds that reflection when making congregational policy. The Dominican Sisters of the Sick Poor, in Ossining, New York, have some nonmembers serving on the board that decides major policy for the community.

Admittedly, in organizations that have been birthed and nurtured by the sacrifices of religious men and women over many years, it is not an easy task to design structures that can equitably give committed lay colleagues an appropriate sense of policy empowerment. This involves a complicated balancing of many values and is not my focus here. My aim is simply to point out that movement into collaboration will raise the issue. In fact, if lay participants in a project of a religious group don't sooner or later claim ownership, along with its corresponding responsibility, the group would be wise to ask if it is recruiting the right kind of people to effect its mission.

As religious move into collaboration, they need to ask themselves, Will we be ready, in a timely way, to share those forms of power? Or, if they have

to intention of doing such a thing, the question becomes, Are we ready to assume the consequences of our colleagueship-without-power approach?

BEYOND COLLABORATION

If it unfolds organically, the empowering relationship between religious and their collaborators may blossom into a mutual desire for comembership. I am not referring to those forms of association in which persons join themselves to religious bodies in a number of volunteer forms. Whatever the content of their mission statements, such associations can be many different things in practice. Some are leagues of prayer for the mission of the community; some are fund-raising networks; some provide another form of connectedness or personal support for people living in an overindividualized society; some are combinations of any or all of these. Each model has its own value and integrity. The only time these associations cause mischief—or even injustice—is when people are not clear about what expectations are being fostered on either side of the relationship. For example, when one side's perhaps unrealistic expectations are not met, there can be disillusionment, temporary wounds, or even deep reluctance to risk new commitments.

On the other hand, when association flowers into genuinely new forms of organizational membership, a whole new kind of organization is born. The old members must know that they cannot simply add on the new; rather, everything must be consciously transformed and reappropriated by all involved in light of the adoption of a radically new mode of membership.

There are communities, for example, that have gained a rather substantial body of experience from forming lay volunteers in the charism of the religious community and sending them out for extended periods to carry on the mission of the group. Maryknoll and the Scarborough Missionaries come quickly to mind. Some lay missionaries have ministered to, and lived so closely with, canonical members for such extended periods of time that the old categories of “temporary” and “permanent” missionaries no longer adequately describe

the real situation. In some instances the lay missionaries have more years of overseas missionary experience than do the canonical members. It should not be surprising, then, that such evidence of long-term, intensive commitment begins to challenge any language that equates only canonical membership with full commitment. It would of course be arrogant for anyone outside those groups to even suggest how they might deal constructively with the situation they have created in response to a vision whose consequences they might not have been able to foresee. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the experience is real, and to alert other groups that intensive and extended sharing of a profound charism is new wine—and we have all been taught authoritatively what that does.

CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS TOGETHER

As we have seen, collaboration with the laity can take many forms and may involve a variety of expectations. It seems clear that as satisfying modes of inclusion are experienced, a natural dynamic toward greater empowerment—and perhaps new forms of comembership—will emerge. What will matter is not the form that any of these relationships take but the authenticity, wisdom, human care, and mutual respect with which people create them. And that involves the demanding discipline of clarifying and negotiating expectations together. God the potter will go about the work of smashing the imperfect firings and shaping new ones, in any case. Our part is to bring our human passion, imagination, and critical analysis to the creative process.



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Joseph Campbell's Catholic Vision

Reverend Frank R. Podgorski, Ph.D., S.T.D.

The hero or heroine is someone who has given his life to something bigger than himself or other than himself. . . . Losing yourself, giving yourself to another, that's a trial in itself, is it not? There is a big transformation of consciousness that's concerned. And what all the myths have to deal with is the transformation of consciousness—that you're thinking in this way, and you have now to think in that way.

—Joseph Campbell

I have just returned from a graduation ceremony at a Catholic university. As the valedictories flowed, the speakers seemed to compete with each other in proclaiming the word "catholic." Although no single speaker explained its meaning, each presumed to link the word with the Roman Catholic tradition.

Had Joseph Campbell been our graduation speaker, his words and vision would certainly have been catholic, although not necessarily Roman Catholic. Paradoxically, a catholic vision proposed by Campbell could suggest avenues for reaching a goal Pope John Paul II once described as the Catholic tradition's becoming "even more catholic." Yet in order to effect such expansive catholicity, the earlier reflection of Pope John XXIII—that every human being stands naked before the mystery of the Absolute—would have to be recalled and taken much more seriously. In both the nakedness and the warm light of the human-divine encounter, several of Campbell's insights might contribute.

Using the celebrated Public Broadcasting Service video series "The Power of Myth" as a springboard, we may glimpse the catholic vision of Joseph Campbell. Yet how Roman Catholic is this vision?

In "The Power of Myth," Campbell mentions both his Catholic upbringing and his parting from that tradition. Michael Toms's radio interviews with him (now published as *An Open Life: Joseph Campbell in Conversation with Michael Toms*) detail many of these personal reflections. When a number of Roman Catholic audiences viewed "The Power of Myth," several claimed to have discovered a fuller understanding of their own catholic tradition, an understanding that enriched, challenged, and stimulated their self-understanding and even dynamized their faith. So much of the beauty, wisdom, and truth of "The Power of Myth" resonates with and evokes ideals central to, a classical catholic vision and tradition. Many viewers described their latent spiritual hopes as "coming alive again" through a fuller understanding of their most traditional myths. Indeed, "The Power of Myth" challenges Roman Catholics to become "even more catholic."

In the video, many symbols familiar to Roman Catholic congregations are probed with empathy and understanding. Dynamic new appreciations and understandings of common, well-known religious rituals and traditions are unfolded with a burst of energy, maturity, and faith. These explorations challenge us to a far more profound catholic faith. Clearly, the catechism lessons of Campbell's youth matured into a classical *fides*

quaerens intellectum: a dynamic faith seeking and searching for the fullest possible understanding of the ever-wondrous gift of life and existence.

Significantly, Campbell's breadth of vision attempts to draw on the resources of the entire human heritage. Stories from American Indian, Hindu, Buddhist, Japanese, and Chinese traditions appear side by side with the most modern and the most ancient of myths. No myth or story is foreign to, or separable from, the human treasury. The great secret is to learn from each tradition—from the mosaic of our many different fonts. From the ancient creation stories of different lands to the contemporary cinematic tales of *Star Wars*, Campbell wishes to listen, read, and try to understand our common human legacy and our common human dilemma. No myth or story can be overlooked or go unprobed. Here, after all, is the inheritance and birthright of every single human being. Through research into these many stories, Campbell discovered the energy to collate and suggest whole new fields of academic endeavor and personal search.

Campbell's life reflected personal lessons learned from his journey into myths. "Moving into my own last years, . . . the myths help me to go with it." As the video comes to an end, Campbell points to the critical importance of separating personal identity from a failing body in favor of "that consciousness of which it is a vehicle." This lesson is repeated in countless myths and traditions. "The basic theme of all mythology," he concludes, "is that there is an invisible plane supporting the visible one." He wants viewers to comprehend this way of thinking; myths help to speed the process. "Myths are clues to the spiritual potentialities of the human life. . . . [they] bring us into a level of consciousness that is spiritual."

SIX INSTRUCTIVE SUTRAS

In Asia, treasured summaries of wisdom are remembered by sutras. A sutra is a thread or strand that encapsulates the key ideas of a particular belief or tradition. Six sutras, or threads, woven together, give us a glimpse of Campbell's catholic vision. By meditating on these sutras, we attempt to penetrate what Campbell calls both the "masks of God" and our common human inheritance.

I. A Hero's Adventure Is to Give His Life for Someone or Something Other than Himself.

We have only to follow the thread of the hero path. Where we had thought to travel outward, we will come to the center of ourselves. (Joseph Campbell)

Every human being, according to Campbell, is a hero in the midst of a grand journey. Each has different dragons, or realities, to experience, to

face, and to slay before a fuller and more profound understanding of the self, one's real identity, can begin to emerge.

The full adventure of life is to be experienced here and now, never postponed to some vague realm of fantasy. As Campbell puts it, "if you don't get it here, you won't get it anywhere." Myths typically suggest that while we may be thinking in *this* way at the moment, we need to be awakened to thinking in *that* way now.

So "The Power of Myth" begins by recalling the journey stories of several great cultural heroes: Moses, the Buddha, Jesus Christ, and Mohammed. Each directly experienced an excruciating trial and then abandoned, or "let go" of, the limited perspective of a "former self." Each then returned with a new and broader vision, a "transformed consciousness," which, like a magnet, attracted and moved the hearts of others.

For example, a transformed bodhisattva returns to the marketplace for the sake of others. Such compassion and love for the other epitomizes a hero's adventure. Joyously and gladly, the hero donates his or her life for the sake of someone or something else or something more. Like St. Francis of Assisi following his conversion, a Buddhist bodhisattva postpones nirvana so as to become one who lives for others. Myths immortalize such legendary heroes in all traditions. Deeply felt inner joy is the universal mark of such spiritual heroes. Campbell fondly tells the story of the North American Indians who joyously play with those whom they know will soon slay them in ritual sacrifice. Though most might consider such play to be grotesque, some reflections in the *Jesuit Relations* (the historical records of the Jesuit missions in North America) came close to recognizing the religious bonds articulated and shared in such community ritual.

Tales of such inner athletes and spiritual heroes abound in the Roman Catholic tradition. Campbell often draws on these very models. Think of Augustine, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Ignatius of Loyola, and their classic stories of interior struggle. Today such records of inner journey seem relegated to obscure hagiographies; even the profound internal spiritual exercises recommended by saints, monks, and hermits are only vaguely familiar to contemporary audiences. When Campbell identifies every person as a hero in the midst of a critical inner journey, the dragons that each must encounter, and the transforming center discoverable within all, he hearkens back to the very roots and foundations of the Catholic tradition.

Interestingly, Catholic audiences viewing "The Power of Myth" clearly identified their spiritual aspirations in the dynamic examples illustrated by Campbell's reflections. These same audiences then named some of their personal dragons—factors they understood to be inhibiting their spiritual

**In the darkness of the
struggle, in the abyss,
in the unevenness and
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growth. They pointed to fear, institutions, security, the status quo, systems, and even the church itself as obstacles to personal growth and development. In the video, Campbell explained how important it was for his own personal growth that he set aside the normal expectations of writing a doctoral dissertation. His "letting go" freed him to become a truly searching scholar. His personal growth was linked with a challenge to become "a bit of a maverick," independent of the dominating system.

The inner spiritual journey described in "The Power of Myth," then, is critical to the fundamental catholic effort. By pointing to the nourishing fonts of all cultures and all traditions, Campbell begins to map the landscape for a truly catholic endeavor. A hero donates life and self to and for the sake of something more.

2. Follow Your Bliss: Myths Are Clues to Spiritual Possibilities.

If you follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. Wherever you are—if you are following your bliss, you are enjoying that refreshment, that life within you, all the time. (Joseph Campbell)

Begin the journey, Campbell suggests, by listening. Experience and hear the demands and needs of the self, your very center. Listen to yourself. Hear the aspirations of the higher self, not merely the demands of the lower self.

Myths lead to a fuller understanding and aware-

ness of the mystery of life itself. They tell of the necessity of facing life directly, wrestling with its ambiguities and possibilities, and finally uncovering authentic meaning and fuller self-understanding. Myths are often the diaries of spiritual heroes in journey to a liminal zone—a frontier where clear but limited underestimations of life experience are challenged to expand to more profound understandings and appreciations.

So many myths repeat the theme that the real dragon is the ego, our complex clinging to a lower self and our own immediate surroundings. Such a limited perspective prevents real growth and real awakening. Here Campbell's wisdom enters. With great enthusiasm and personal belief, he offers one cardinal rule: simply follow your bliss.

Calling to mind the ancient argument within the classical Confucian tradition regarding the goodness of human nature, Campbell recommends that fundamental human instincts and drives and energies simply be encouraged to expand, grow, and develop naturally. Myths stimulate this natural growth process. Campbell chides that Pelagian tendency within the Roman Catholic tradition to label nature and natural impulses as evil. This, he argues, is the opposite of being catholic. It is contrary to all that Jesus Christ taught and lived. Rather, Campbell reiterates, follow your bliss. On this point, he recalls the celebrated Japanese scholar D. T. Suzuki's expression of puzzlement in first trying to learn about Western religion: "God against man. Man against God. Man against nature. Nature against man. Nature against God. God against nature—very funny religion."

Myths become catalysts, keys to codes or laws already scripted within nature. Heroes are encouraged to search for and discover the beauty and joy located within the stillness of the human center. All of this life, as the Hindu tradition vividly reminds us—all that we experience here and now—is but a form of divine-human love play. Joy and enthusiasm are infallible signs of divine presence.

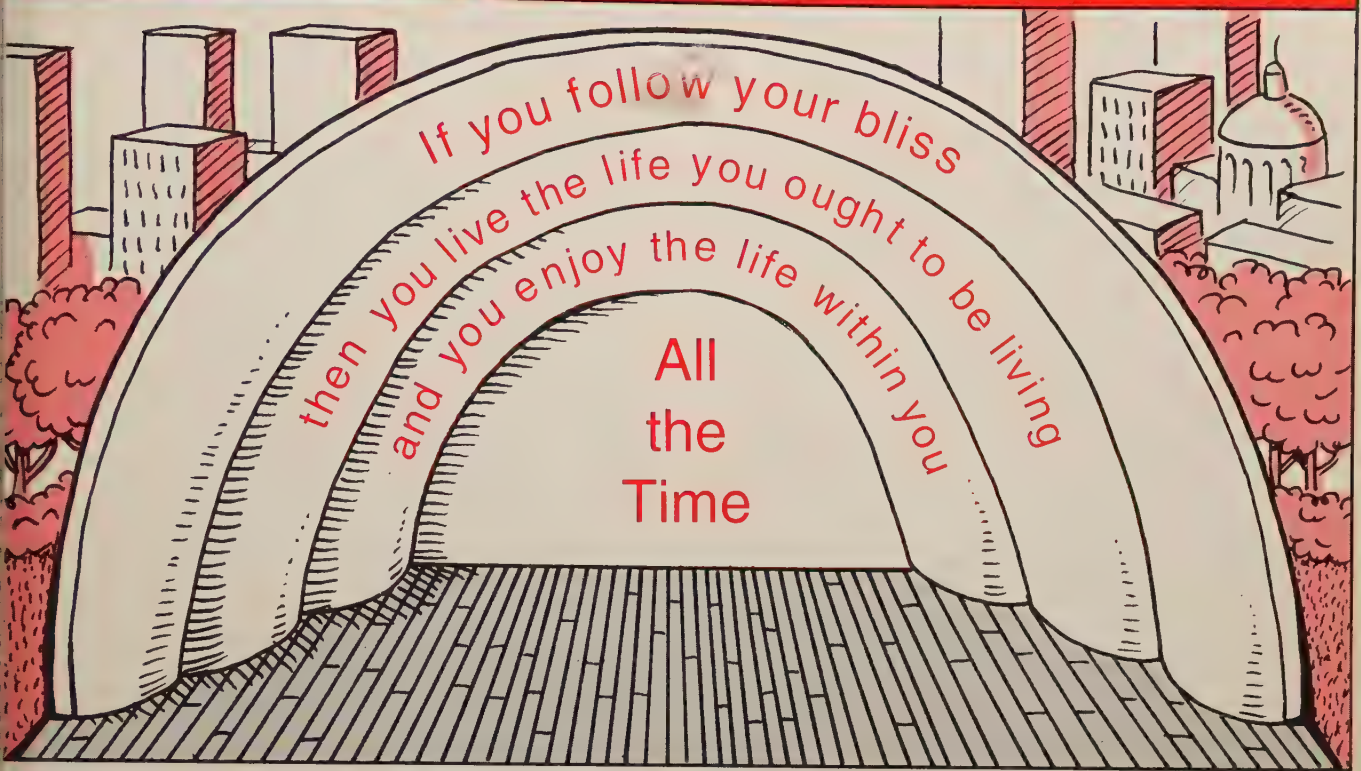
3. To Be Human Is to Be an Artist—A Poet, a Painter—Creating the Masterpiece of Self.

One thing that comes out in myths is that at the bottom of the abyss comes the voice of salvation. The black moment is the moment when the real message of transformation is going to come. At the darkest moment comes the light. (Joseph Campbell)

In the darkness of the struggle, in the abyss, in the unevenness and uncertainty of human effort and striving, there is great value. Here is where creativity and genius are born. Suffering evokes the human heart and begins to reveal fuller answers. Here life blossoms. Paradoxically, the joy of this new life is preceded by ordeal, pain, and struggle.

Artists seek to encounter life directly. Only by facing its pathos and its pain, its warmth and its

One of Campbell's Fundamental Insights



ight, can one really begin to paint, to write, and to create. Myths are maps to guide us through this entire life process; myths resemble teachers who point in a certain direction. They point to a level of understanding and consciousness that is fuller and more holistic, a level at which an artist may be able to discover and create the self.

Like artists, other human beings first envision who and what they would become and then try to mold themselves accordingly. As the self, our personal work of art, begins to develop, myths open new and fuller horizons of consciousness and understanding. Our potential seems limitless. Myths describe new worlds, other vistas, fresh horizons. Myths vividly paint images of a realm philosophers usually term "transcendental."

In this other realm, new self-understandings awaken and challenge individuals to radical transformation. Witness the transparency of those who have reached the "other shore"; they spontaneously attract others to that realm. Campbell muses that *transformation* means becoming naturally transparent and totally open in our humanness. The great mystery is that such transforming transcendence and such other realms lie hidden within everyone. As both the African scriptures and the Hindu Upanishads proclaim, whoever understands this mystery truly becomes a creator. The mystery of creation, the wondrous mystery of the self, is

that we are constantly in the process of creating and becoming something more.

4. Our Innermost Self Is Divine: Truly, We Are Gods.

The images of myth are reflections of the spiritual potentialities of every one of us. Through contemplating these, we evoke their powers in our lives. (Joseph Campbell)

Jesus proclaims that the "kingdom is within." Zen Buddhists speak of a limitless Buddha-nature. Taoists tell of a Tao that is within and yet without. The Upanishads teach that *atman*, the deepest human center, is absolute. When Islam prays, it calls upon a God infinitely beyond the very names, words, and concepts it is using in these prayers. When Judaism prays, so sacred is the divine name that never ought it be uttered. All these aspirations are human cries, feeble attempts to express the great mystery of our existence. All such cries sense and point to something sacred, but ultimately all such utterances are totally inadequate expressions of an experience beyond all words and concepts. All echo particular experiences of holiness.

Campbell approaches this sacred mystery from the perspective of human experience. "If you don't experience it here and now, you're not going to get it." "Eternity isn't some later time. . . . Eternity is

that dimension of here and now that all thinking in temporal terms cuts off. And if you don't get it here, you won't get it anywhere." Faith, for Campbell, is neither vague, mysterious, nor exotic. Rather, faith is simply a factor of human experience, something that can be validated by the inner journey of everyone. Perhaps human existence may best be appreciated by a Buddhist-like awakening to what is actually taking place here and now, at this very moment.

Jesus noted that a grain of wheat must first be buried in the earth and die before it can rise and begin to bring forth new life. With wonder, the Upanishads proclaim "*Tat Tvam asi*" ("Thou art that"); in awe, they conclude that words are incapable of expressing the truth that every human being really has a divine foundation.

Myths such as The Quest for the Holy Grail, The Knight of the Green Chapel, the many Krishna stories, or the legends of the trials of Rama and Sita all tell of the struggle to reach this other land of fuller understanding and more complete consciousness. Again, the hero's journey is the story of everyone. If only we persevere with courage, we will discover our sacred center to be divine. Myths encourage us to continue along this route; ultimately, traditional references to our Christ-nature or Buddha-nature point to the sacred experience of life itself, here and now. "Eternity has already begun" is the secret Campbell proclaims with a smile. He is not making a blind act of faith; he is expressing a real fact of human experience and existence.

One Catholic priest reacted to "The Power of Myth" by noting how powerfully the traditional Christian teaching on the kingdom of God within is presented by the video. This effect was achieved by directly pointing to common human experience. The sacredness of each human being is also fundamental to catholic teaching. In the video dialogue with Bill Moyers, Campbell explained:

There is a definition of God which has been repeated by many philosophers. God is an intelligible sphere—a sphere known to the mind, not to the senses—whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere. And the center, Bill, is right where you're sitting. And the other one is right where I'm sitting. And each of us is a manifestation of that mystery. That's a nice mythological realization that sort of gives you a sense of who and what you really are.

5. We Are All One: We Are the Consciousness of Our Nourishing Earth.

Myths of the Great Goddess teach compassion for all living beings. There you come to appreciate the real sanctity of the earth itself, because it is the body of the Goddess. (Joseph Campbell)

One of the most moving citations in "The Power

of Myth" is the letter from the Indian Chief Seattle bequeathing trust, respect, and reverence for the earth, land, forests, rivers, and streams to his successors. Chief Seattle lived, breathed, and articulated a sacred bond with the earth and earth processes. He prayed that his successors would respect and live that sacred trust. Had they done so, the impending ecological crisis would not be nearly so harrowing.

Native Americans clearly appreciate that we are all one gigantic organism. Within an awareness of such oneness, the laws of nature have to be followed with care. So in preparatory hunting and planting rituals, Indians give thanks to the animals and plants for the nourishment and energy soon to be received. These rituals explicitly acknowledge that animals and plants are soon to become the very selves and beings of the hunters and the planters. Animals, plants, and all of creation must therefore be cherished and treated with the utmost reverence, respect, and gratitude. Human selfishness must never be allowed to violate the natural laws or rhythms of the plants, animals, or streams.

Not only are we the products of the earth; we are in fact the very consciousness and voice and awareness of the earth. Human consciousness must articulate and develop compassion and care for all other parts of our single organism. The Upanishads teach that all is one, that there really is no distinction between apparently separate and isolated individuals. The Buddhist scriptures tell of the compassion (*karuna*) that arises once we become awakened to the primordial fact that all are truly linked, bonded, and interconnected parts of each other. Jesus Christ once expressed it this way: "I am the vine; you are the branches." When a sense of such "at-one-ment" becomes awakened, compassion and sharing arise, together with the possibility of awakening to the sacredness of our community.

Through awakening to this oneness, myths tell of a wholeness or holiness; they sense a oneness that transcends any particular time or place or space. All that is becomes recognized as sacred. Such consciousness, such an awakening, bonds and links all together in the great mystery of existence.

6. Silence and Awe Become the Ultimate "Non-Words" of Grateful Appreciation.

Meaning is essentially wordless. . . . Words are always qualifications and limitations. (Joseph Campbell)

Several of the earliest Vedic hymns pondered the mysterious beginning of language. Journeying within themselves, rishis, the earliest Hindu sages, uncovered a foundational sound, *om*. As this primordial cosmic echo broke up and fragmented, partial sounds and syllables clustered with a naturally evolving grammar into structure, specific forms, and distinctive sounds. Words emerged. A

entence was born. Some communication became practicable. Community became a possibility. No wonder the Vedas revered the Sanskrit language as sacred. Sanskrit was considered a great, mysterious gift, a grace. Whole new worlds and new possibilities opened for humanity. Language and its potential came into the human horizon.

Contemporary linguistic analysis and philosophical probing into the mystery of language indicate that the foundational questions raised by the Vedic wisdom still have not been adequately answered. Whence really came language? Is there communication that transcends language? Where, after all, is "meaning" to be found?

Many religions teach that all words are but metaphors or analogies. Thomas Aquinas considered all language to be mere analogy. At the end of his life, after having composed the great *Summas* of classical Catholic theology, he concluded that all of his writings and all of his words were but mere straw, fit only to be burned. The great Brahmanic traditions of India constitute years and lifetimes of contemplating the one sublime truth, *Brahman-param-atman*. But when novices are asked to articulate the truth they are struggling to understand, their very first words are immediately rebutted by the corrective "*neti . . . neti*." It is not this, it is not that; no words or concepts can circumscribe or limit or describe that which is beyond description. Siddhārtha Gautama, having achieved enlightenment and having become the Buddha, simply refused to speak. No words could ever possibly convey his understanding. Zen masters and classical Taoists ridicule the use of words in matters of ultimate concern: "Does a dog have a Buddha-nature? Answer: Mu, Mu!"

When one has reached the stillness of the center, awe and grateful silence are the only possible responses. For Campbell, this is the ultimate "non-word" of gratitude for our mysterious gift of life and existence.

This is the silence out of which *om* arises, and back into which it goes. My life is the *om*, but there is a silence underlying it too. That is what we would call the immortal. And there wouldn't be the mortal if there weren't the immortal. How important is it to break past all language, every now and then, and simply stammer "Oh . . . Ah . . ." Silence, awe, and wonder are the ultimate "non-words" of gratitude for the gift of life.

WHAT IS CATHOLIC?

Hero . . . bliss . . . creativity . . . divine . . . oneness . . . consciousness . . . silence: these are some of the threads of the catholic vision probed by Joseph Campbell. As our reflection suggests, many of these themes echo the classical catholic tradition. The contemplative prayer patterns of Catholic monks and nuns and the spiritual goals expressed by

For Campbell, faith is neither vague, mysterious, nor exotic

modern parish congregations dovetail many of the goals beautifully described in "The Power of Myth." Indeed, several Catholic audiences claimed that the candid spiritual quest and openness of Campbell's reflections challenged their own faith to expand, open, and become more catholic. Some even claimed that their personal faith broadened and took on a new dynamism through pondering the themes suggested by Campbell.

In recent years, the Roman Catholic church has shown much more interest in the spiritual resources of other religious traditions. In 1964 Pope Paul VI reflected that "catholicity indicates the ever extendable multiplicity of human forms. . . . Today we need to have a more adequate notion of the church's catholicity." Accordingly, the Second Vatican Council began to sketch paths for official conversations and dialogue with representatives of other Christian traditions, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, the Chinese and Japanese traditions, folk traditions—indeed, for conversation with all religious peoples. The establishment of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians and the Second Vatican Council's pastoral declaration *Nosstra Aetate* are among the clearest indications of official Roman Catholic interest in non-Christian spiritual endeavors.

More recently, this initial awakening to dialogue has demanded that Roman Catholics clarify their own sense of religious identity. Therefore, in 1975 *Evangelii Nuntiandi* declared that all Catholic missionary effort must proclaim as clearly as possible its central belief in Jesus Christ while simulta-

neously beginning to learn from the spiritual wisdom in other traditions. Similarly, the Vatican Dialogue and Mission Statement of 1984 declared that genuine awe, respect, sensitivity, and reverence for "all that the Spirit has produced" demand that further interreligious dialogues and conversations be pursued with vigor.

Here, concisely and precisely, is the Roman Catholic dilemma. While fidelity to root foundations demands that the central belief in Jesus Christ be proclaimed as openly and as fully as possible, fidelity to the Spirit demands that the truth, wisdom, and beauty of all spiritual paths be affirmed, encouraged, and fostered. This, after all, is the human heritage that official Roman Catholic documents praise so highly. Discovering how these two different thrusts complement each other may very well be the single most important task for contemporary theology.

Framed within this context, Campbell's catholic vision does not address the central Roman Catholic theological question. He does not, for example, wrestle extensively with the critical question of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. He prefers rather to stimulate and encourage all forms of human spiritual growth and maturity. So, from the perspective of official Roman Catholic theology, it must be admitted that Campbell's catholic vision is deficient and in need of much further refinement and precision.

AN EXCELLENT MAP

From the perspective of the human being in search, Campbell's insights are extremely helpful and beneficial. His emphasis on interiority and personal growth and maturity is important and should be applied to all religious quest. Indeed, Campbell's map of a catholic vision is an excellent foil that should help Roman Catholic theologians sharpen their efforts to articulate a more expansive

catholicity. He has skillfully detailed and given flesh to the key questions that theologians must begin to address in our age.

Normally we understand the word *catholic* to mean universal; this is certainly true. Dictionaries indicate that the word also connotes a bringing to perfection or a making perfect. When all of the roots of all of the springs and all of the fonts of the common human heritage begin to touch and nourish the human hero in honest pilgrim quest, catholic vision, fully capable of leading any searcher to perfection, will be nearer. To the pursuit of such a wondrous quest, Joseph Campbell would utter "Amen"; then, with appreciation, he would lapse into the awe of grateful silence.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Campbell, J. *Recent Myths and Rites of the Primitive Hunters and Planters*. Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications, 1987.
 Campbell, J. *Myths to Live By*. New York, New York: Bantam Books, 1973.
 Campbell, J. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. New York, New York: Pantheon, 1949.
 Campbell, J. *Transformations of Myth Through Time*. New York, New York: Harper & Row, 1990.
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BOOK REVIEW

By Way of the Heart: Toward a Holistic Christian Spirituality, by Wilkie Au, S.J. New York, New York: Paulist Press, 1989. 219 pp. \$14.95.

Many of us need someone who can personally assist us to come closer to God, because we are confused about how to live a gospel life within a rapidly changing world. I believe Wilkie Au's book proves that he is one such person.

The commonsense guidance that Au offers is rarely to be found in a good deal of contemporary writing on spirituality. Sometimes there is too much emphasis on the psychology of personal growth. Readers are then apt to become so absorbed in self-analysis that they become apostolically paralyzed; they are unable to relate the gospel to the world around them. Sometimes the spiritual is overly stressed, and the human context of mission at the personal and community levels is neglected. For example, unjustified personal and community fears, anger, denial, and problems concerning identity and affectivity remain unresolved or untouched by gospel values. The failure to deal with problems of human growth weakens apostolic effectiveness. Other literature does attempt to foster a holistic spirituality through the use of the social sciences and the insights of the great spiritual masters; however, many readers are left perplexed because the language used is too esoteric. Surely, they say, a holistic approach to gospel life should not be so difficult to understand.

Au's book skillfully avoids these pitfalls. His claim that his aim is "to articulate a holistic spirituality based on gospel values" is, I believe, justified. He draws from many sources—scriptural, psychological, personal—to illuminate the multifaceted process of spiritual growth. And he is able to do so in language that the nonspecialist can readily grasp.

Moreover, readers will feel that the writer is speaking about their situations—the human challenges they meet as they struggle to come closer to the Lord. Au grasps the contemporary relevance of what St. Paul speaks of as the "groaning inside ourselves" and "our waiting with eagerness for our bodies to be set free" (Rom. 8:23). With hope intensified, the reader will feel impelled to go forth with renewed enthusiasm to share his or her faith with others in creative ways.

Au says that a spirituality is holistic when it acknowledges that all aspects of a person's life must be subjected to the transforming influence of the Incarnation. In the first two chapters Au offers a framework for an understanding of an authentic holistic spirituality. Considered are such down-to-earth realities as ministry and leisure, friendship and generativity, prayer and humor. Subsequent chapters address particular issues at greater depth: decision making, life choice, prayer, obedience, chastity, and poverty. I find his approach to the last three virtues particularly refreshing.

Au frequently emphasizes the fact that a commitment to holistic spirituality demands initiative and creativity. For example, this means being open to new forms of prayer. Mature obedience cannot be realized without "the constant cultivation of a spirit of initiative and responsibility." An authentic holistic spirituality will also inevitably inspire cre-

ative pastoral involvement in the world around us; we cannot escape into methods of preaching and living the gospel that have outlived their apostolic usefulness.

This book is written for all who seek to come closer to the Lord today. Not all Christians, Au says, are invited to profess the three vows, but all are called to embody the underlying gospel values that the vows represent. This book will help religious, clerics, and laypeople to understand better what they have in common and how they can complement and support each other in their journey with the Lord.

After finishing this book I remained puzzled for some time: Why had Au succeeded in his efforts to offer a holistic spirituality while many others have failed? The writer of the foreword, William Johnston, S.J.—himself an esteemed spiritual guide—provides the clues. Au has had considerable in-depth multicultural experience; he personally knows the qualities we must foster if we are to keep a balance when confronted with change. His writings—whether on friendship, loneliness and solitude, humor, discernment—always have a personal

touch and appeal. He writes from experience not only as a skilled psychologist but also as a counselor and formation expert. He recently completed a term of six years as novice master. Johnston says that Au is a man of prayer, and one senses this throughout the volume. Without his strong faith orientation, Au could never have achieved so well his goal of writing this book.

I recommend *By Way of the Heart* without hesitation. My hope is that Au will share more of his experience and insights before too long.

—Gerald A. Arbuckle, S.M., Ph.D.



Father Gerald A. Arbuckle, S.M., Ph.D., has extensive experience in anthropological research on religious life. He is co-director of the Refounding and Pastoral Development Unit, Catholic Theological Union, Sydney, Australia.

Right to Choose or Refuse Treatment

Under the laws of most states in the United States, patients have the right to either choose or refuse any type of treatment. There are times, however, when patients are incapable of expressing their own wishes. On such occasions, weighty decisions must be made by family or religious community members, doctors, hospital administrators—and sometimes, when conflicts arise, by courts of law. One way of avoiding confusion at the time of decision making involves the patient's expressing his or her wishes in writing before illness or hospitalization occurs. A "living will" can serve as the means by which individuals specify what treatments they do or do not want if they become irreversibly incapacitated and dependent on life-sustaining treatment.

Special forms are available that enable a person to prepare a living will. Some of these merely state that "heroic" treatment is to be rejected. Others leave room for the writer to specify what forms of treatment are to be refused, such as a mechanical respirator, cardiac resuscitation, or a feeding tube. One can ask to be allowed to die at home rather than in a hospital, and

painkilling drugs can be requested. Legal advice may prove helpful in preparing a living will, but it is not necessary.

In addition to this document, some states (e.g., New York and California) require a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care (DPAHC). This is a legally binding document that empowers a designated person to make health care decisions on the patient's behalf. It is recommended by health care providers that the elderly, the chronically ill, and persons about to undergo major surgery should place their living will in the care of a close member of their family or religious community. It should be signed before two witnesses and, in some states, must be notarized along with a DPAHC. It is advisable that copies be given to the patient's doctor and anyone else who is likely to become involved in patient care at the time of crisis. Forms and information may be obtained by phoning Concern for Dying (212-246-6962) and the Society for the Right to Die (212-246-6973). *The Essential Guide to a Living Will*, by B. D. Cohen, is published by Pharos Books and sells for \$5.95.

Reply to Readers' Questions

The editors of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT have received a significant number of letters from our readers in recent weeks inquiring about the journal's relationship to The Institute of Living. The connection is implied on the inside front cover of each issue and was recently described in a vague way in an article syndicated by the Associated Press. We think a reply bringing some clarity to the matter is appropriate at this time.

Several issues ago (vol. 10, no. 3, Fall 1989) the Editor's Page column noted that our Editor-in-Chief had moved to Hartford, Connecticut, to work as a psychiatrist at The Institute of Living. His principal motive for joining the staff of this hospital was based on the fact that the Institute provides care for increasing numbers of priests and religious (over a hundred last year) in a special program designed for them and for other professionals, such as doctors, nurses, lawyers, and educators. The hospital, although not affiliated with any religious denomination, has treated clergy and religious since 1822.

When Father Gill first moved to Hartford in May 1989, the editorial offices of the journal remained in Cambridge, Massachusetts. By the end of the year, however, it was apparent that having the Editor-in-Chief and the rest of the journal's staff working in the same city would be decidedly advantageous. Moreover, by that time

The Institute of Living was able to provide office space for HUMAN DEVELOPMENT on its campus. The space is being rented, and the convenience of having the entire editorial staff in one city and building is nothing short of a blessing. In answer to the questions we have received, we want to state here that the journal is not published by The Institute of Living, and there is no connection between the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development and the Institute or any of its services.

From time to time during recent years, generous contributors to our HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ministry have provided financial assistance to help us continue and expand our services throughout the world. We hope that our work will continue to receive such deeply appreciated and needed help. The Institute of Living has its own needs and conducts its own campaign to raise funds for the maintenance and development of its excellent facilities and programs. We state this to clarify that donations to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT or the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development should be made out to those names; contributions to The Institute of Living should be directed to the hospital. We pray daily for the benefactors of both ventures.

—The Editorial Staff
of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human Development: A Worldwide Effort

During the past several years, staff members of the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development have provided workshops, courses, and programs, along with professional consultations, throughout the world. These presentations have been offered for religious leaders, spiritual directors, formation personnel, pastoral counselors, clergy, religious, and laity. Our staff welcomes invitations to travel, especially to Third World areas, as well as to other regions where topics and issues of the type featured in *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT* can be profitably discussed. Some of the locations where we have already conducted programs are indicated on this map.



- ALABAMA**
1 Montgomery
- ALASKA**
2 Anchorage
- CALIFORNIA**
3 Los Angeles
4 Oakland
5 San Diego
6 San Francisco
- COLORADO**
7 Denver
- DELAWARE**
8 Wilmington
- FLORIDA**
9 West Palm Beach
- GEORGIA**
19 St. Louis

- HAWAII**
11 Honolulu
- ILLINOIS**
12 Chicago
13 Moline
- IOWA**
14 Sioux City
- LOUISIANA**
15 New Orleans
- MASSACHUSETTS**
16 Boston
17 Worcester
- MICHIGAN**
18 East Lansing
- MISSOURI**
19 St. Louis

- MONTANA**
20 Billings
- NEW MEXICO**
21 Santa Fe
- NEW YORK**
22 New York
- OHIO**
23 Cincinnati
- OREGON**
24 Portland
- PENNSYLVANIA**
25 Carlisle
26 Wernersville
- TEXAS**
27 Dallas
28 Houston
- VERMONT**
29 Manchester
- DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**
30 Washington

- WASHINGTON**
31 Spokane
- WISCONSIN**
32 Milwaukee
- BAHAMAS**
33 Nassau
- CANADA**
34 Halifax
35 Montreal
36 Winnipeg
- AUSTRALIA**
37 Melbourne
38 Perth
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- CHINA**
40 Macao
- ENGLAND**
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- FRANCE**
42 Grande Chartreuse
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- GUAYANA**
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- JAPAN**
53 Tokyo
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55 Mombasa
56 Nairobi
- KOREA**
57 Kusan
- MEXICO**
59 Acapulco
- PERU**
60 Lima
- PHILIPPINES**
61 Manila
62 Clark Field
- TAIWAN**
63 Taipei
- THAILAND**
64 Taichung
65 Bangkok
- ZIMBABWE**
66 Harare
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- TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**
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